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A

TOUR

ROUND

NORTH WALES,

PERFORMED

During the Summer of 1798 :

CONTAINING

*Not only the Description and local History of the Country, but also,
a Sketch of the History of the Welsh Bards ;*

& An ESSAY on the LANGUAGE;

Observations on the Manners and Customs; and the Habitats
of above 400 of the more rare Native Plants; intended as a
Guide to future Tourists.

By the Rev. W. BINGLEY, B.A. F.L.S.

OF ST. PETER'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Illustrated with Views in Aquatinta by Alken.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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1800.

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duced to present them to you; and I have only to express a wish, that the gift were better worth your acceptance than it is.

Receive it, however, if not as valuable from its own merits, yet as affording you a testimony of the sincere esteem, with which I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate, and

Obliged humble servant,

W. Bingley.

PREFACE.

THE accounts that I had at different times received of the stupendous and picturesque scenery of some of the counties of North Wales, induced me, in the summer of 1798, to spend three months that I had to spare from my College avocations, in that romantic part of Great Britain. These I justly conceived, would be so amply sufficient, that they would allow me time *leisurely* to examine all the most material places.

I can here truly say, that every expectation I had been taught to raise, was more than fulfilled. The traveller of taste, who is in search of the grandest scenes that nature has formed in these islands; the naturalist, and the antiquary, may all rest assured that they will find here ample entertainment in their respective pursuits,

My mode of travelling was chiefly on foot, but sometimes I took horses, and at other times proceeded in carriages, as I found it convenient. The former, notwithstanding all the objections that have been made against it, will, I am confident, upon the whole, be found the most useful, if health and strength are not wanting. To a naturalist, it is evidently so; since, by this means, he is enabled to examine the country as he goes along; and when he sees occasion, he can also strike out of the road, amongst the mountains or morasses, in a manner completely independent of all those obstacles that inevitably attend the bringing of carriages or horses.

Next to being on foot, the tourist will find a horse the most useful; but in this case, if he intends to ramble much amongst the mountains, it will be necessary for him to take a Welsh poney, which, used to the stony paths, will carry him, without danger,

danger, over places where no English horse, accustomed to even roads and smooth turf, could stand with him.

In carriages, no persons will, of course, expect to travel, except along the great roads, (which indeed extend quite round the country), but at all the inns, horses may be procured to penetrate into the mountainous and more romantic parts.

There is an inn at almost every respectable town, where post chaises are kept; but owing to the great numbers who now make this fashionable tour, delays are at times unavoidably occasioned by these being all employed. This, however, is a circumstance that seems to me of but little consequence to the tourist, since, at almost every place where he has occasion to stop, amusements may be found more than sufficient to occupy the two or three hours of delay.

Evans's smaller map of North Wales,* which is the correctest map I ever travelled by, will be found a most useful companion. The roads have in this been laid down with so much accuracy, that, wherever the traveller may have occasion to find fault, it will be more than probable that some change has taken place since the survey was taken. A small pocket compass, amongst the mountains, will be almost as necessary as the map.

The tourist, who happens to take along with him these volumes, will, in pronouncing and understanding the Welsh names, be somewhat assisted, by examining carefully the former part of the chapter on the language, where he will find the force of the letters, and the explanation of such

* The price of this map is eighteen shillings; and it may be had of E. Williams, N^o. 11, Strand, the publisher of this work; as may also the larger one, on nine sheets, price three guineas.

words as commonly occur in the composition of the names of places, &c.

The expences of travelling in Wales, notwithstanding what Mr. Pratt,* and some other writers have said upon the subject, I found in general, but little less than those on the roads in the central parts of England. Provisions are here very little cheaper than with us; and the expences of house-keeping have, within the few last years, been considerably increased.

Having put down these previous hints for the future tourist, it is now proper that I should say somewhat of the present work.

Throughout the whole of my journey, I endeavoured to make my pursuits and my observations as general as possible: and in these volumes, I have, as far as lay in my power, made it my rule to put down for

* Author of *Gleanings through Wales*.

the information of others, every thing that I wished to have known when I was myself making the tour. This, allowing for all the differences of taste and opinion, seemed to me the best criterion by which to judge of the wishes of the public; in what manner I have succeeded, the volumes themselves must shew.

I have, as will be found upon perusal, interspersed them but little, either with reflections or incidental stories: indeed of the latter, I ought candidly to confess, that I met with very few which I thought worth recording. Two late tourists, Mr. Pratt and Mr. Warner, if they have not introduced the novelist too often in their works, (which, by the way, I shrewdly suspect they have) were infinitely more fortunate in meeting with adventures than I was.

In the description of the country, I have invariably endeavoured to let the scenes
form

form themselves, and to paint nature simply as I found her. The tourist, who is desirous of forming reflections for himself, will, I doubt not, at all events thank me for my intentions in this respect. I shall ever remember, in a tour that I made some years ago to the Lakes of the north of England, how much I found myself deceived and disappointed, by the turgid and high-flown descriptions which fill almost every page of Mr. West's Guide through that country; a book, in other respects certainly of merit. This circumstance alone led me to a determination, if possible, to avoid that error. When the scenery exceeds the description, it will be viewed with pleasure; but when it falls short of it, no one but a traveller can tell the disappointment that is felt.

As the present work was intended chiefly for the use of the tourist, I judged also that I should be rendering myself of more service,

*
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service, in not permitting it to lay claim entirely to originality: but in return for this, I have, I believe, (except in the first and last chapters of the *Tour*) always inserted marks of reference to the authors from whence my information is extracted. To Mr. Pennant's accurate and learned work on this country, I have in various instances, as will be hereafter seen, been much indebted.

It may indeed, and not improperly, be asked, what need there was for any other account, when one so accurate as the above was already extant? In answer to this, I have to observe, that the present is more commodious for carriage: the former being in two volumes quarto, is extremely heavy and inconvenient for persons to carry along with them. Mr. Pennant has taken no general rout. He begins near his own house in Flintshire, proceeds through that county, part of Cheshire, Shropshire, and Denbighshire, and returns

to

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to Downing; from whence he again sets out, and takes not a regular rout over the remainder of North Wales. I by no means mention this circumstance as a derogation from the intrinsic merits of his work, it is only done to shew it's inconvenience as a guide to the tourist. It contains much matter, and many long dissertations on subjects of antiquity, (particularly an excellent life of the Welsh hero, Owen Glyndwr, which alone occupies about 70 pages) these, though well calculated both to instruct and amuse in the closet, are too long and uninteresting for the generality of persons when upon their journey. And to conclude the whole, it has been *out of print* for some time.

The literary world has been much indebted to the industry and abilities of Mr. Pennant, for his accurate examinations and descriptions of Wales, Scotland, and several parts of England, in which he has evinced
a depth

a depth of knowledge that does not fall to every man's lot. He was the first who made the taste for home travels so prevalent in this country; and it would be uncandid not to declare, that this gentleman has given us some of the earliest descriptions that are worth preserving. In his tour in North Wales, from being a native of the country, and having access to all the principal libraries there, he possessed many advantages that in his other journies he did not, which of course must tend to render this his most correct work.

In the present volumes, from my being resident in Cambridge, and having had access to several of the libraries there, I may perhaps be permitted to flatter myself that I have been able to insert some curious information, and many historical facts, which even Mr. Pennant has omitted.

When I made the journey, I very strangely took but short descriptions of the town

towns of Chester and Shrewsbury, intending to confine my observations entirely to Wales: but afterwards, upon considering the matter, these places seemed so materially connected with the others, that rather than omit them, I determined to add to my own the most useful observations of Mr. Pennant and Dr. Aikin;* and since the references for these would, if inserted, have occurred very often, I thought it better to leave them out.

In the *History of the Bards*, I have been much indebted to several parts of Mr. Jones's excellent work, entitled "*Musical and Poetical Relics of the Welsh Bards.*" In the more antient part of the history, I have taken the liberty to prefer the authorities of the Roman writers to that of Mr. William Owen, who has lately, in the introduction to his translation of the

* In his *History of the Country round Manchester*.

elegies of Llywarch Hên, given us a history of bardism, very different from any we ever heard of before ; for in what manner soever new opinions may have sprung up, it appears to me difficult, if not impossible, to overthrow the accounts of contemporary writers, whose authority no one seems before to have doubted ; and who were certainly themselves present in some of the scenes they describe.

The *Itinerary* I have attempted to make as useful as possible. When I made the tour, I took with me one, somewhat similar, extracted from the accounts of former writers. The distances are marked, I believe, pretty accurately ; and all the villages, and some other places, are here inserted ; many of which, from their insignificance, have not been noticed in the body of the work.

In the Appendix, I have placed, chiefly at the desire of some of my Welsh friends,

Lord

Lord Lyttleton's two interesting Letters on this Country, and a few other detached things, that I thought might be of use.

Very little of *Botany* will be found to occur in the interior of the volumes; this I have confined almost entirely to the catalogue at the end, where I have given the habitats of the plants with as great a degree of exactness as I possibly could.

In the *Index*, which is pretty full, I believe I have inserted every minute place whose name occurs, in order to render that, to naturalists in particular, of as much use as possible. They frequently want to know the situations of very small and obscure places, which, without some such guide, it would be difficult to find.

The indexes to Mr. Pennant's Tour, I found by no means sufficient for this purpose; for in many cases, where the places were not described at length in the body of the work, they were omitted there.

I have

I have now, in conclusion, to acknowledge my obligations for the kind and liberal assistance of several gentlemen in Wales, but in a most particular manner to the Reverend Peter Williams, late of Jesus College, Oxford, Rector of Llanrûg, near Caernarvon, who was my companion in many of the scenes here described: to John Wynne Griffith, Esq. F. L. S. of Garn, near Denbigh; the Reverend Hugh Davies, F. L. S. of Aber, near Bangor; the Reverend Evan Lloyd, of Maes y Porth, near Newborough; and to Mr. David Thomas, of Red Wharf, near Beaumaris, Anglesea.

W. B.

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CHAP. I.

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 COURTS—ROOD-EYE.

THE antient city of Chester is situ-
 ated on a rising ground, above the
 river Dee, by which it is guarded on the
 south and west sides. From its form,
 one would be led to conjecture that it
 was indebted to the Romans for its foun-

dation, for the four principal streets crossing each other at right angles, still retain the original appearance of a Roman camp. Of this however there is no direct historical evidence, though it is well known to have been one of their military stations, and from its having been the place where the twentieth Legion was chiefly quartered, it was called *Caer Legion*, and *Caer Lleon Vawr ar ddyfr Dwy*, the camp of the great Legion on the Dee. It was called by the Romans *Castrum Legionis*, the camp of the Legion, *Deva* and *Deunana* from the river, and afterwards *Cestria* from *Castrum*, a camp or military station; the Saxons gave it the name of *Legan-cester* and *Legaceaster*.*

At different times there have been discovered here, various remains of Roman antiquity, such as altars, statues, coins,

* Bishop Gibson's edition of Camden's *Britannia*, fol. 1695. 557.

and a hypocaust or furnace for heating a *sudatorium* or sweating-room, which is still to be seen at the Feathers' Inn. The hypocaust is the only part of the structure left; it is rectangular, and consists of a number of low pillars supporting square tiles, perforated for the passage of the warm vapour.

After the Romans departed from Great Britain in the fifth century, this place fell under the government of the British princes, with whom it remained till the year 603, when it was wrested from them by Ethelfrid king of Northumbria. Brochwel Yscithroc king of Powes attempted to oppose him, but with an army composed chiefly of Monks, from the monastery of Bangor-is-coed not far distant, depending more upon the assistance of Heaven than in the manual strength of his army; he placed them naked and unarmed upon an eminence, where Ethelfrid observing

them in the attitude of prayer, fell upon them, and without mercy flew upwards of twelve hundred.*

Sometime after this Chester appears to have again got into the possession of the Britons, but about 828 it was finally wrested out of their hands by Egbert, who annexed it to the Saxon crown.

* *Chronicon Saxonicum*, edit. 1662, p. 25. *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* a venerabili Beda, 1643, II. c. 2. p. 111, 112, 113. *Flores historiarum per Matthæum Westmonasteriensem*, 1570. p. 206. *Commentarioli Britanniae descriptionis paginamentum auctore Humfredo Lhuyd*, 1572. *Britannicarum Ecclesiarum antiquitates*, Jacobo Ufferio. 1639. p. 132. *Fuller's Church History*, 1655, p. 63. *Tanner's notitia monastica*. Rowland's *Mona antiqua restaurata*, 1766, p. 152. The Saxon Annals, Beda and Mr. Pennant place this battle in 607, Usher in 613, but the others in 603, which appears to have been the true date of the event. See a letter of Mr. Wynn of Llan Gynhafal upon the subject in the *Cambrian Register*, vol. II. p. 521.

In

In the same century it was seized, and almost demolished by the Danes, who having been defeated by Alfred the great, had retreated for safety into this part of the country; but it was soon afterwards restored by his valiant daughter Ethelfleda, the wife of Ethelred Duke of Mercia.*

After the Norman conquest, William created his nephew, Hugh Lupus Earl of Chester, and granted to him the same jurisdiction in this County, that he himself possessed in the rest of the Island. By virtue of this grant the Earls held parliament here, consisting of the barons and tenants, which were not bound by the acts of the English parliament,† and the town of Chester enjoyed sovereign jurisdiction within its own limits. The Earls were petty princes, and all the land hol-

* Matt. Westm. 354. Gibf. Camden, 558.

† Gibf. Camd. 567.

ders in the county were mediately or immediately their vassals, and under the same allegiance to them as to the kings of England.

Hugh Lupus when he received the earldom, immediately repaired the town walls and erected the castle;* the former having either fallen into decay since the days of Ethelfleda, or not being thought sufficiently strong for the exigencies of the times.

In several reigns subsequent to the Norman conquest, Chester was made a place of rendezvous for troops in all expeditions against Wales, and frequently suffered in the contests betwixt the two nations. Camden says that " the skirmishes here between " the Welsh and English in the beginning of the Norman times, were so " numerous, the inroads and excursions " and the firing of the suburbs of Han-

* Gibs. Camden, 558.

" bid

“brid beyond the bridge, so frequent,
 “that the Welshmen called it *Treboeth*,
 “that is, burnt town; they tell us also
 “that there was a long wall made there
 “of Welshmen’s skulls.”*

In the time of Hugh Lupus the port of
 Chester appears to have arrived at some
 degree of consequence. The exports con-
 sisted in slaves,† (for this inhuman traffic

was

* *Gibb. Camden*, 359.

† “Here is a town called *Brihtstow* (*Bristol*)
 “opposite to Ireland, and extremely convenient
 “for trading with that country. *Wulfstan* induced
 “them to drop a barbarous custom, which neither
 “the love of God nor the king, could prevail on
 “them to lay aside. This was the market for
 “slaves collected from all parts of England. It
 “was a most moving sight to see in the public
 “markets, rows of young people of both sexes
 “tied together with ropes; of great beauty and
 “in the flower of their youth, daily prostituted,
 “daily sold. Execrable fact! wretched disgrace!

Bristol

B 4

“men

was carried on even by the Saxons to a great height) in horses and cheese. The imports were chiefly spices and other luxuries of the East, procured either from Venice or afterwards from Pisa and Amalphi; Cloth from Flanders; Linen from Germany; reliques and other articles, fuel for superstition, from Italy; wine from France and Spain; and furs, whale-bone, feathers and other articles from the northern regions.

Lucian* a jolly Monk, who flourished about the time of the conquest, speaks of ships "coming from Gascoign, Spain, "men unmindful even of the affection of the "brute creation! delivering into slavery their relations, and even their very offspring." beta, S. Wulfstan in Anglia Sacra, quoted in Pennant's Tour, I. 134, 135. Wulfstan was Bishop of Worcester, and died in the year 1095.

* See an extract from his writing in Gibb. Camd. 559.

" Ireland

“Ireland and Germany, which by Christ’s
“assistance, and by the labour and conduct
“of mariners, repair hither and supply
“them with all sorts of commodities; so
“that being comforted by the grace of
“God in all things, *we drink plentifully*;
“for those countries have abundance of
“vineyards.”

Upon the death of John Earl of Chester, without issue male in 1237, Henry III. took the Earldom, and all the powers annexed to it, into his own hands; and soon afterwards granted to the city its first royal charter.

In this city it was that the Welsh made their final acknowledgement to the sovereignty of England in the year 1300, by Edward of Caernarvon, Prince of Wales, when the freeholders of the county did homage and fealty for their respective lands.

Henry Duke of Lancaster, afterwards Henry IV. in 1399 seized the city and
castle

castle in his way to Flint, against the ill-fated Richard II, and on his return secured him one night in the fortress,* and cruelly put to death Sir Perkin a Legh and other gentlemen, whom he had taken with their unfortunate master.

In the civil wars of Charles I. Chester adhered with great fidelity to the royal cause; and it was not till every hope had been cut off by the important victory which the parliament's army had gained at Rowton Heath, of which, from the leads of the Phoenix Tower the King himself was an anxious spectator, that it was surrendered to them on the 3d of February 1645-6, on the most honourable terms, after a gallant resistance for near five months, during part of which time the garrison were reduced to so great a want of provi-

* Stow's Annals, edit. 1631, 322. Carte's History of England, edit. 1747, &c. II. 635.

sions as to be obliged to live, even on their horses and dogs.

It is said by Camden * that Henry IV, Emperor of Germany, who married Maud the grand-daughter of William the Conqueror, and had put into prison his father, the Pope and some of the cardinals, withdrew himself from the world, and retired to this place, where he resided unknown as to his real character for near ten years; but death approaching, he discovered himself, and was afterwards buried in the abbey. This story seems altogether doubtful, and the latter part of it is certainly false, for Henry IV. it is well known, died at Liege in 1106, and was magnificently interred in the Cathedral of that city.

Chester has been often admired by strangers on account of the singular structure of its principal streets. These have been ex-

* Gibson's edit. 558.

cavated to the depth of about eight feet out of the earth. On a level with them are low shops and warehouses; whilst above and on a level with the kitchens and courtyards are galleries, or *Rows* as they are called, running along the fronts of the houses, and affording a covered walk for foot passengers.* Over these are the higher stories of the houses. These rows are disagreeably close and often very dirty; and a person is under the necessity of ascending and descending wherever a lane crosses the street. The four large streets are for the most part of a good breadth, but upon the

* These rows appear to have been the same with the antient *vestibules*, and to have been a *form* of building preserved from the time that the city was possessed by the Romans. They were built before the doors, midway between the streets and the houses; and were the places where dependants waited for the coming out of their patrons. Pen-
nant's Tour, I. 113.

whole

whole this city is rather venerable and singular than elegant.

The Cathedral is a large, irregular and heavy pile of building, at present become ragged from the decay of it's mouldering stone. It was built on the site of a nunnery founded about the year 660, by Wolferus King of Mercia, in favor of his daughter Werburgh, afterwards sainted, to whom it is dedicated. The chief part of the present building was erected in the reigns of Henry VI. VII. VIII. but principally in those of the two last. The revenues of the Abbey at the dissolution were according to Dugdale valued at £1003. 5s. 11d. and according to Speed at £1073. 17s. 7d.

The choir is very neat, and the gothic tabernacle-work over the stalls is carved in a light and elegant manner. About the walls in the chancel are dispersed the monuments of several bishops and churchmen, but none of them of any magnificence.

The

The Bishop's throne stands on a stone base richly ornamented with gothic carving. Around it's upper parts is a range of small images designed to represent the kings and saints of the Mercian kingdom. This base is generally called the shrine of St. Werburgh, but it is in fact nothing more than the pedestal on which it stood. The shrine itself, in which were deposited the sacred reliques, must have been small and portable, and probably made of gold or silver; for in 1180, we read, that it was brought out to stop the raging of a fire in the city, which for a long time was invincible by every other means; but the approach of the holy remains instantly proved their sanctity by putting an end to its furious devastation.

Chester was antiently part of the diocese of Litchfield, one of whose bishops removing the seat of his see hither in 1075, was the occasion of his successors being frequently stiled *Bishops of Chester*. But it

was

was not erected into a distinct bishopric till the general dissolution of monasteries, when Henry VIII. in 1541 raised it to that dignity; adding the bishopric to the province of Canterbury;* but soon afterwards he disjoined it from Canterbury, and annexed it to the province of York, in which it still remains. This diocese contains the entire counties of Chester and Lancaster, part of the counties of Westmorland, Cumberland, and Yorkshire, two chapelries in Derbyshire, and five parishes in Flintshire, amounting in all to two hundred and fifty-six parishes, of which a hundred and one are impropriations. The Bishopric is valued in the King's books at £420. 1s. 8d. and is computed to be worth annually about £2700. To this Cathedral belong a Dean, two archdeacons, a chancellor, a treasurer, six prebendaries and other inferior officers.

* Gibb. Camd. 558.

The Bishop's palace is a neat plain structure, forming one side of the Abbey court, two others of which consist of handsome modern-built houses.

Besides St. John's, which was once collegiate, and has been a large and magnificent pile of Saxon architecture, founded by Ethelred King of Mercia about 680, there are no churches in this place which can boast any thing extraordinary. Within this are some very curious specimens of the massy strength of the Saxon columns and arches.

The castle is situated above the river at the south end of the town; though much dilapidated, still affords some appearance of a fortress. It consists of an upper and lower ward, the entrance to each protected by gates and round towers, and formerly also by a ditch and drawbridges. Within the castle are the county gaol and the courts of Justice. The latter have been
taken

taken down, and a new gaol, shire-hall, &c. erected upon a much-improved and extensive plan. The castle has a governor, lieutenant-governor and constable, and is garrisoned by two companies of invalids.

The walls round this city are almost the only entire specimen of antient fortification now existing in Great Britain. Their circuit is nearly two miles, and they are sufficiently broad on the top to admit of two persons walking abreast. These are at present kept in repair by the inhabitants merely for the purposes of pleasure and recreation. In commanding an extent and variety of prospect they can scarcely be exceeded. From hence the Welsh mountains, the hills of Broxton, the insulated rock of Beeston crowned with it's castle, the rich intervening flat, and the perpetually changing objects on the river compose, in different parts, scenes extremely pleasing.

The only manufacture of consequence in Chester is that of gloves, which is carried on to some extent. There are also a small manufactory of tobacco pipes, an iron foundry, snuff mills, ship builder's yards, and other concerns, which afford some but not much employment to the poor.

The maritime business is of no great extent. It chiefly consists of the coasting and Irish trades, with a small portion of trade to foreign parts. The number of ships belonging to this port is but small. The business of ship-building is carried on here continually and with advantage, many vessels from 100 to 500 tons being built annually.

Till the new channel was made for the River Dee, which was finished about the middle of the present century, vessels of twenty tons could scarcely reach the town, and ships of burthen were obliged to lie under Newtown, ten miles lower, which

was

was the origin of that assemblage of houses on the adjacent shore, called Park-Gate, still the station of the Irish packets. But now the water is of depth sufficient to allow vessels of 350 tons burthen to come up to the quays at spring tides. This new canal opens from the sea near Northop, about ten miles above Chester, and there are two ferries across it, which make a communication with the opposite county of Wales. The river just above the bridge is crossed by a stone causeway, which causes a fall of thirteen feet, and cuts off constant communication by vessels between the upper part of the river and the lower. There are however six or eight tides that flow over the causeway, and some reach upwards of twenty miles up the country, which allows a navigation for small barges as far as Bangor, in Flintshire. The causeway serves as a dam for the purpose of turning mills. The snuff mills are situated

directly upon it, and the town corn mills, which are reckoned very complete in their construction, are close to the bridge, one arch of which conveys a stream to their use.

The government of this city is vested in a corporation, consisting of a mayor, recorder, two sheriffs, twenty-four aldermen, and forty common-councilmen; two of whom are *leave-lookers*, whose office it is to inform of all persons exercising trades within the city without being freemen. The two senior officers are murengers, or receivers of the murage duties for maintaining the walls. Two are treasurers, who are next in succession to the mayor. There are likewise a sword and mace bearer, and other inferior officers.

The law courts of the city are the courts of Crown-mote and Port-mote, and the Sessions, all held in the Exchange. In the

Port-

Port-mote the mayor, assisted by the recorder, holds pleas to any amount. He also holds the sessions of peace, in which criminals are tried, with the power of passing sentence of death. There is another court, held at the *Pentice*, an antient building at the centre of the city, in which the sheriffs are judges; this is for civil causes only. The city Gaol is in the Northgate. In the Exchange, which is a large handsome pile of building, supported on columns, the body corporate hold their assemblies for public business, and the elections of mayors and other officers. Here likewise the mayors give their entertainments, and the citizens their dancing assemblies.

The city returns two members to parliament, chosen by the freemen at large, and the sheriff is the returning officer.

A fine meadow lying between the walls and the river, called the *Rood-eye*, is used

as a common by the citizens, and also for a race-ground; for which purpose it is admirably adapted, lying like an amphitheatre immediately beneath the walls, and also commanded by the high banks on the opposite side of the river.



CHAP.

CHAP. II.

FROM CHESTER TO FLINT.—HAWARDEN AND
CASTLE—EULOE CASTLE—DEFEAT OF HENRY II.
—NORTHOP—FLINT—CASTLE AND GAOL.

LEAVING Chester, I proceeded on my journey towards Holywell. Hawarden,* the first place that I arrived at, is a small clean-looking market town in† Flintshire.

* The Saxons called this place *Haordine*. The British name for it is *Pennard Halawg*, corrupted probably from *Pen y Lluch*, or the head land above the lake; Saltney and the other subjacent marshes having been once covered by the sea.—Pennant's Tour in Wales, 1784. I. 92.

† The County of Flint is the smallest of the Welsh counties, being only about thirty miles long,

Flintshire. In the place itself I observed nothing deserving attention ; the surrounding country is pleasant, and the castle, which stands at the east end of the town, commands a fine and extensive prospect towards the River Dee and the County of Chester.

This building, which at present consists of little more than fragments of the walls and keep, is situated in the grounds of Sir Stephen Glynne Bart. It has been an extensive building of much strength, situated on a considerable eminence and surrounded by a double ditch.

ten broad, and seventy in circumference. It contains near 160,000 acres of land, and 32,400 inhabitants ; is divided into five cantreds or hundreds, and contains twenty-eight parishes. It has one city, and four market towns. There is a hundred about ten miles in length and six in breadth belonging to this county, situated between those of Denbigh and Salop.

The

The late Sir John Glynne took great pains in having the rubbish removed from the ruins; and in one place was discovered a long flight of steps, at the bottom of which was a door and formerly a draw-bridge, which crossed a deep long chasm (nicely faced with free-stone) to another door leading to two or three small rooms, probably places of confinement, where prisoners might be lodged with the utmost security, after pulling up the bridge over the chasm that intervened between them and the open day.*

The circular keep, which is more elevated and perfect than the other parts of the building, has, within these few years, had a room fitted up in it, in the modern stile. This addition, however, and the painted statues, interspersed in the

* Pennant's Tour in Wales, Vol. I. 104.

grounds,

grounds, but ill accord with the wild and shattered ruins around them.

The time of the foundation of this castle is not known. It appears to have been possessed, soon after the Norman conquest, by Roger Fitzvalerine, son of one of the noble adventurers who followed the fortunes of William the Conqueror.* It was held by the seneschalship to the Earls of Chester, and was afterwards the seat of the barons of Mont Alt or De Monte Alto, who were stewards of the Palatinate of Chester.†

On the extinction of the antient earls, this and other fortresses belonging to them were resumed by the crown.‡ In 1265 a peace between Wales and Cheshire was established here in a conference between

* Collins's Peerage, I. 48.

† Gough's Camb. II. 588.

‡ Pennant's Tour, I. 94.

Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leiceſter, and Llewelyn, Prince of Wales;* and it was in the year following that Montfort obliged his captive monarch, Henry III. to make an abſolute ceſſion to the prince, not only of this fortrefs, but of the ſovereignty of all Wales.† Very ſoon after this time it muſt have been deſtroyed; for I find that Llewelyn, in 1267, reſtored to Robert de Monthalt the whole of his lands at Hawarden, at the ſame time reſtraining him from building a caſtle there for thirty years.‡ It ſeems however to have been rebuilt ſometime before the expiration of this period; for in the night of Palm Sunday, the 22d of March, 1281, David, Lord of Denbigh, brother to Llewelyn,

* Carte's Hiſtory of England, II. 151. He quotes *Annales Ceſtrenſes*.

† Rymer's *Fœdera*, I. 814. Carte's Hiſtory of England, II. 156. Pennant's Tour, I. 95.

‡ Rymer's *Fœdera*, I. 845.

having

having forgotten the favours which had been so lavishly conferred upon him by Edward I. after his reconciliation with that prince, surprized and took this castle, and in it Roger de Clifford, Justiciary of Chester, cruelly massacring all who resisted.*

This and other things, committed by these two princes, were the cause of a war, which at last ended in the total subjection of North Wales to the English. The ungrateful David, after the death of Llewelyn, being taken by the king, suffered for his offences in a severe and most exemplary manner; his sentence was, to be drawn by a horse to the place of execution, as a traitor to the king, from whom he had re-

* Matt. Westm. 370. Hen. de Knyghton apud *Historiæ Anglicanæ Scriptorum*, X. Lib. III. p. 2464. Powel's History of Wales, 337. Holinshed's Chronicle, II. 280. Stow's Annals, 200. M. Westm. and Hen. Knyghton place this insurrection in the ensuing year.

ceived the honour of knighthood; to be hanged for the murder of Fulk Trigald and others in this castle; for his sacrilege in committing those murders on a Palm Sunday his bowels were to be burnt; and finally his body was to be quartered and exposed in different parts of the kingdom, because he had in different parts conspired against the life of the king.*

This castle seems to have continued in the barons of Monthalt till 1327, when Robert, the last baron, having no issue male, made it over to Isabella, queen of

* *O mors misera proditoris, ad caudas equorum per municipium Salopiæ fuit tractus, dein suspensus, postea decollatus, postmodum truncus corporis in quatuor partes fuit divisus et finaliter cor ejus cum intestinis fuit combustum, caput Londin. portabatur, quod super turrem Londinensem erigebatur super palum, è regione capitis fratris sui. Quatuor partes corporis ipsius acephali ad Bristoliam, Northampton, Ebor. Winton. Mittebantur. Matt. West.*
371. See also Carte's History of England, II. 195.

Edward

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Edward

Edward II. but on her disgrace it fell to the crown.*

In 1336, Edward III. granted it, along with the stewardship of Chester, to William de Montacute Earl of Salisbury;† in whose family it continued till the year 1400, when his great nephew, John Earl of Salisbury, was beheaded by the townsmen of Cirencester, after attempting an insurrection in favour of his deposed master, Richard II. Salisbury had, prior to this event, granted his estates in fee to Thomas Montague, Dean of Sarum, Lodowick de Clifford, John Venour, and Richard Hertcombe, and their heirs: but after his attainder, by act of parliament, in the 7th Henry IV. they became forfeited to the king.

* Gibb. Camd. 688. Dugdale's Baronage, I. 527.

† Dugdale's Baronage, I. 646.

In 1411 Hawarden was granted by patent from Henry IV. to his second son, Thomas Duke of Clarence; but in 1414, the 2d of Henry V. Thomas, the son of John Earl of Salisbury, petitioned the parliament that the former sentence might be annulled; but upon his suit being dismissed, Henry made to Clarence another grant, in which he declared the former to be invalid.*

Clarence was slain at the battle of Baugy, in 1420, and dying without issue, Hawarden returned to Henry V. whose son, Henry VI. in 1443, gave it to Sir Thomas Stanley;† but about seven years afterwards it was resumed and given, together with Mold, to Edward Prince of Wales. On this occasion John Hertcombe claimed Hawarden as heir to the last survivor of

* Pennant's Tour, I. 97.

† Gibb. Camd. 688.

the four feoffees, he alledging that John Earl of Salisbury was not possessed of it at the time of his forfeiture, and on this plea obtained a privy seal to enquire into it. An inquisition was taken, his plea was found good, and restitution was made.— This John Hertcombe conveyed it to the use of John Needham and his heirs.

In 1454 a fine was levied to Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, and Alice his wife, (daughter to Thomas Montacute, the great Earl of Salisbury) and Sir Thomas, afterwards Lord Stanley, to the use of Sir Thomas Stanley and his heirs male, on condition that if he should sell the estate, suffered discontinuance, or died without issue male, it should revert to the Earl of Salisbury or the heirs of Alice his wife.

On the death of Lord Stanley the fee descended to his son Thomas, afterwards Earl of Derby, and after his decease to his second wife, Margaret Countess of Richmond,

mond, the mother of Henry VII. On the death of Margaret, Hawarden descended to Thomas Earl of Derby, grandson to the late earl, and continued in his family till the execution of the gallant James Earl of Derby, in 1651; soon after whose death it was purchased from the agents of sequestration by Serjeant Glynne.*

On the restoration the lords made an order, on the 17th July, 1660, that the estates of the Earl of Derby, and several other noblemen, which had, in the late usurpation, been sold without their consents, should be re-possessed by them without molestation. This induced Glynne to make an offer to the earl of the surrender of Hawarden for a lease of three lives. The proposal however was either rejected or not immediately accepted, the consequence of which was the loss of the whole

* Pennant's Tour, I. 98.

to the Derby family. The lords, resentful of the indignities their order had experienced in the late troubles, began with an attempt to obtain reparation to one of the greatest sufferers. In December, of the same year, they sent down to the commons a private bill for restoring to Charles Earl of Derby all the manors, lands, &c. which had belonged to his late father. This was strongly opposed, and the bill was laid aside, without ever coming to a second reading. The Earl was then glad to compound for the property of this place, and granted it to Serjeant Glynne and his heirs,* in one of whom, Sir Stephen Glynne, it yet remains.

In the civil wars of the last century, this castle was early possessed by the parlia-

* Pennant's Tour, I. 99, who quotes Drake's Parliamentary History, and an account communicated to him by the late Sir John Glynne.

ment, being betrayed to them by the governor;* and was kept for their use till the year 1643, when part of the English forces, who had been serving against the rebels in Ireland, upon the cessation there, came over to assist the king in England, and landed at Mostyn, a place about sixteen miles distant. Soon after their arrival they made an attack on Harwarden Castle, and being joined by some other forces † after a fortnight's siege, and
 “ much ink, † but little blood spilt, the
 “ castle, being in want of provisions, was
 “ surrendered to Sir Michel Ernley, on con-
 “ dition to march out with half arms and
 “ two pair of colours, one flying and the

* Carte's Life of the Duke of Ormond, II. 471. III. 204. quoted by Mr. Pennant, I. 100.

† See the ridiculous letters which passed on both sides, in Rushworth's Historical Collections, part IV. vol. II. p. 301. and Pennant's Tour I. 101, 102.

“other furlied, and to have a convoy to
“Wem or Nantwyche.”*

The royalists retained it till after the
surrender of Chester in 1645, when on the
17th of Feb. O. S. it was vigorously be-
sieged by the parliament's forces under
General Mytton, and on the 16th of March
following was surrendered to them.† On
the 22d of December the parliament, on
account of some disturbances amongst their
soldiers in north Wales, ordered this and
four other castles to be dismantled.‡ These
orders extended only to the rendering of it
untenable; it's farther destruction was ef-

* Rushworth's Collections, part IV. vol. II. p.
301.

† Rushworth's Historical Collections, part IV.
vol. I. p. 21. Whitelock's Memorials of English
Affairs from the beginning of the reign of Cha. I.
to the restoration of Cha. II. 192, 197.

‡ Whitelock's Memorials, 231.

fectured by the owner, Sir William Glynné, between the years 1665 and 1678.*

Having passed a bridge a little beyond the ninth mile-stone from Chester, I turned on the right over some meadows, in search of a small fortress I had heard of, called Euloe Castle. It stands about a quarter of a mile from the road, and from it's situation on the edge of a glen, and surrounded by wood, I had some difficulty in finding it. It has consisted of two parts; the larger of which has been an oblong tower rounded at one end, and about fourteen yards long, and ten or twelve in width, guarded on the accessible part by a strong wall. The other part consists of an oblong court, at the extremity of which are the remains of a circular tower. This fortress has been well defended; on one side by a trench, and on the other by the deep valley that runs beneath it.

* Pennant's Tour, I. 103.

Leland * says, that it was in his time
 “ a ruinous castelet or pile;” and he is
 almost the only writer in which I find it
 mentioned.

It was in Coed Euloe, the wood adjoining
 to this place, that Henry II. in an expedition
 against Owen Gwynedd, prince of Wales,
 received a most severe repulse from his two
 sons, David and Conan. The army of
 Owen was encamped against him, and
 seemed determined to come to an engage-

* Leland's Itinerary, V. 53. “ Hoele, a gen-
 “ tilman of Flyntshir, that by auncient accustom
 “ was wont to give the badge of the sylver harpe
 “ to the best harper of *North Walys*, as by a pri-
 “ vilege of his auncestors, dwelleth at Penrine yn
 “ Flyntshir; he hath also a *ruinus castelet or pile*,
 “ at a place caullid Castell Yollo. This word
 “ Yollo, is the same in Walsche that Llewelin ys
 “ and Ludovicus in Latine. Yollo is two miles
 “ from Northop Village, a little on the left hand,
 “ in the highe way to Chester.”

ment;

ment ; but this was done only as an artifice, to draw the English into a narrow and dangerous pass, between two ranges of hills, where a numerous ambuscade was secretly placed under the command of his sons. Henry, too confident in the strength of his army, and not relying sufficiently upon the opinion of those who had a more perfect knowledge of the country than himself, fell into the snare, and paid dearly for his rashness ; for when he and his vanguard, following the Welsh, who in a sham flight retiring into the valley, were engaged in fight, another party on a sudden rose with most horrible outcries from under the cover of the woods which hung over the steep, and assaulted them with stones, arrows and other missile weapons ; the disadvantage of the place, and the confusion they were thrown into totally disabled them from resisting this unexpected attack ; and they were routed with a dreadful slaughter, the pursuit being continued

to Henry's encampment at Saltney, a few miles distant.*

When I arrived at the village of Northop, I turned on the right, out of the usual road from Chester to Holywell, and went towards Flint. About two miles from this place, and from the slope of an hill, at the bottom of which stands the town, the scenery opened in a most pleasing manner. It was high water; and the Estuary of the Dee, which runs up towards Chester, enlivened by the vessels "lightly floating on it's surface," the towns of Park-Gate, and some others on the opposite shore, appeared to peculiar advantage. At the ebb of the tide this wide arm of the sea dwindles into a narrow stream, inclosed on each side by long and dreary banks of sand.

* Lyttleton's History of Henry II. vol. II. p. 72, 73.

Flint * is a market town, small, irregularly built, and by no means pleasant. It has once been surrounded by a ditch and ramparts, but these are now nearly destroyed. Being situated near the sea, it is resorted to by a few from the neighbouring country as a bathing place; but the marshy coast which extends to the edge of the water, and over which the sea frequently flows, must render this extremely disagreeable. The church, or rather chapel, for it is nothing more than a chapel of ease to Northop, is a dirty, ill-looking building, with a boarded turret. From this place there are packets which set sail every tide for Chester and Park-Gate. This is

* Mr. Pennant in his Tour, I. 43, conjectures that this place was the same with what was antiently called *Colsul* or *Colesthill*; and the chapel to have been (before it was rebuilt) that granted by David ap Lewelyn to the Abbey of Basingwerk, and called *Capella de Colsul*.

from

from thence a charming, and as far as it relates to Park-Gate, certainly an expeditious mode of travelling.

The castle stands upon a rock in the marsh, and so near the river that sometimes, at high water, the walls are washed by the tide.† It had a communication with the town by a bridge, which led to the outwork, called the Barbican, within which, in 1785, the county goal was erected. This building has been square, having a tower at each corner, some remains of every one of which are yet left. The tower at the south-east corner is much larger than the others, and is called the double tower. Its outward diameter measures forty feet; it is formed by two concentric walls, each six feet thick, having a gallery, eight feet broad, included

† The *channel* of the Dee is at present at some distance, but it formerly flowed close under the walls. There are still in some parts rings to which ships were moored. Pennant, I. 45.

between

between them, and leaving a circular area in the centre of about twenty feet in diameter, into which there was an entry from the gallery by four doors. This appears to have been the keep. The interior of the castle is a square court, whose area measures about an acre. In the curtain, on the west side, are several windows with pointed arches.

The founder of this castle has not yet been ascertained with any degree of certainty. Camden * and Lord Lyttleton attribute it to Henry II. after his defeat at Coed Euloe, and say that it was finished by Edward I. whilst Jabian, Stow, and many others, say it was built by Edward only, about the year 1275,† not mentioning anything

* Gough's Camd. II. 588. Lyttleton's History of Henry II.

† Hen. de Knyghton de event. Angliæ, 2462. Holinshed's Chronicle, II. 279. Stow's Annals, 200.

thing of its being begun by Henry, though they in the same sentence, say that Edward strengthened Rhyddlan Castle, which plainly evinces that they distinguished between building and repairing.

On Palm Sunday, 1281, the Welsh being wearied of their subjection to the English, and as a signal of a general insurrection, seized this and other castles, plundering at the same time all who refused to join their party.* Wherefore, in the year following, Edward repairing to Wales,

Leland says "*Quia Lewellinus princeps Walliæ ad parlamentum Eduardi regis venire noluerat, rex Walliam adiens castellum de Flint de novo fundavit, castrum de Rudelan firmavit, ubi Lewellinus subdidit se regi, dando pro transgressione, L. M, librarum.*" *Collectanea de rebus Britannicis*, I. 246.

* Matt. West. 370. Hen. de Knyghton, 2464. Powel's History of Wales, 361. Stow's Annals, 201.

after

after he had taken Caregurle Castle, marched to this place, upon which Llewelyn and his brother fled, leaving the castle undefended.*

In 1332, Edward III. granted this and other castles to the Black Prince, with all his lands here to hold to him and his heirs kings of England;† and in 1385 it was bestowed by Richard II. upon Robert Vere, Earl of Oxford, who at the same time was created Lord Chief Justice of Chester.‡

It was surrendered in 1399 to the treacherous Percy Earl of Northumberland§, who shortly afterwards betrayed into this place the unfortunate Richard II. under pretence that the Duke of Lancaster desired

* Carte's History of England, II. 193.

† Pennant's Tour, I. 47.

‡ Gröse's Antiquities of England and Wales.

§ Stow's Annals, 321.

only to have his property restored, and to give to the kingdom a parliament. Northumberland met the king at Conwy, where he had gone after his return from Ireland, and proceeding with him towards this place, the King observed a band of soldiers amongst the recesses of the mountains near Penmaen Rhôs, and would have returned, but Percy catching his horse's bridle forcibly, directed his course. They dined at Rhyddlan, and came the same evening to Flint. The morning following the King met Bolingbroke in the court of the castle, who saluting him, said, that for the future he intended to assist him in the government of the realm; "which" continued he "you have for two and twenty years ruled to its prejudice." The King with the Earl of Salisbury, the Bishop of Carlisle, Sir Stephen Scroope, and two others of his officers, were then made to mount on horses, which, says Stow, were not altogether worth forty shillings,

lings, and thus led to Chester from whence after a night's rest they were sent to London.*

From this time I meet with nothing relative to Flint Castle till the civil wars of the reign of Charles I, when it was garrisoned for the King, after having been repaired at the expence of Sir Roger Mostyn, who was appointed Governor.† In 1643 it was besieged by Sir William Brereton and Sir Thomas Middleton, and was defended by the Governor till all the provisions, even to horses, failing, he surrendered it upon honourable terms. It must afterwards have been taken by the royalists, for in August 1646, it appears to have been surrendered to Major General Mytton,‡ and in December of the same year, it was, with Hawar-

* Pennant's Tour, I. 50.

† Carte's History of England. Pennant's Tour, I. 47.

‡ Whitelock's Memorials, 221.

den and three other castles, ordered by the parliament to be dismantled.*

In the year 1283, Edward I. granted to the town of Flint it's first charter, by which it was made a free borough, and the Mayor sworn faithfully to preserve it's liberties. This was confirmed in the reign of Philip and Mary, and afterwards in the 12th of William III.†

The assizes for the county of Flint are held at Mold. The county gaol, in the Castle-yard, is in a fine healthy situation, and built on a plan similar to that at Ruthin. Over the door, at the front of this prison, on a black and white marble, is the following Inscription, which informs us of the benevolent purposes for which it was built.

* Rushworth's Collections, part IV. vol. I. 297.
Whitelock's Memorials, 231.

† Pennant's Tour I. 46.

In the
Twenty-fifth year of his Majesty *Geo. III.*
In the Sherifalty of Sir Thomas Hanmer, Bart. this
prison was erected
instead of the antient loathsome place of confinement.

In pity
to the misery of even the most guilty,
To alleviate the sufferings of less offenders, or of
the innocent themselves,
whom the chances
of human life may bring within these walls.

Done at the expence of the County,
aided by the subscription of several of the Gentry ;
who,

in the midst of most distressful days,
voluntarily took on themselves part of the burthen,
in compassion to such of their countrymen,
on whom

Fortune had been less bounteous of her favours.

Joseph Turner, Architect.

In the inside, on a white marble, is a list
of the names of the subscribers, with the
sums they gave ; beginning with Sir Roger
Mostyn, Bart. £100.

This place, in conjunction with Caerwys, Rhyddlan Caergurle and Overton, sends a member to parliament. The election is made by the inhabitants paying parochial taxes, and the returning officers are the two bailiffs appointed by the Mayor.



CHAR.

CHAP. III.

HOLYWELL.—MANUFACTURES—WENEFRED'S
WELL AND LEGEND—MIRACLES—MOSES—
REMARK OF DR. FULLER—DEVOTEES—BASING-
WERK ABBEY AND CASTLE—WAT'S DYKE.

THE road betwixt Flint and Holywell runs chiefly along the coast. It lies low, and is hemmed in on one side by a dismal salt-marsh, and on the other by hills, which completely preclude every idea of a distant view of the country. I found it altogether perfectly uninteresting. About half-way I passed through a little hamlet, where the begrimed and sooty faces of its inhabitants seemed to indicate their employment to be about some of the many

lead works with which this neighbourhood abounds.

Holywell is a place of by far the most importance in Flintshire. The numerous manufactures in it's vicinity, and its easy access to the sea, have rendered it the great mart of this part of the kingdom. The town is spacious, but irregular; it is pleasantly situated on the slope of a mountain, which extends nearly to the water. Many of the houses are good, and it altogether bears an air of opulence scarcely to be met with in any other town in North Wales. An admirer of the works of art may, at this place, find his taste amply gratified by viewing the numerous works of lead, calamine, copper, brass, and cotton.

The parish church is situated in a bottom at one end of the town, and so low that the prayer-bell can be heard only to a very little distance. This defect is remedied in the following singular manner—

a person,

a person, hired by the inhabitants, has a leathern strap fastened round his neck at the end of which is suspended a bell of a tolerable weight, and over one of his knees is buckled a cushion; thus accoutred he sets out just before the hour of prayers, and walks round the principal parts of the town jingling the bell every time his cushioned knee comes forward.

Giraldus Cambrensis says, that there was formerly near this place a rich mine of silver.*

Wenefride's Well, from which the name of Holywell was given to this place, springs with vast impetuosity from a rock at the foot of a steep hill at the bottom of the town. This well is covered by a small Gothic building, said to have been erected by Margaret the mother of Henry VII. but

* *Itinerarium Cambriæ auctore Syl. Giraldo Cambrense, Lib. II. Cap. X. p. 872.*

by the frieze (observes Mr. Grose*) of the outside cornice, which is ornamented with monkeys and other grotesque figures, it seems to be of more antient date. Nothing can exceed the delicacy and elegance of the Gothic work on the inside of this building, which forms a canopy over the well, having in the centre, and serving as origin to the Gothic arches, a circular shield on which is carved a coat of arms, though not at present distinguishable. In a nich, opposite the entrance, stood once a statue of the Virgin Mary, but this has been long destroyed. The chapel over it, which is of the same date as the other part of the building, is now converted into a charity school. The well is an oblong square about twelve feet by seven. The water passes through an arch into a small

* Antiquities of England and Wales.

square court; under this arch the catholics used to swim as an act of penance.

The legendary story of the origin of this well is singular and curious. Wenefride* (in Welsh Gwenvrewi; Tadar Aled, a Welsh Bard, who flourished about A. D. 1450, has celebrated this Virgin and the reputed miracles of her well, in a poem still extant), who is said to have lived in the early part of the seventh century, was a beautiful and devout virgin, of noble parentage. She was niece to St. Beuno, who, having obtained from her father leave to found a church upon his possessions here, took her under his protection, in order to assist her in her religious exercises. Cradocus, the son of King Alen, whose residence appears to have been not far distant,

* The following account is taken principally from Bishop Fleetwood's edition of the Life of St. Wenefrede, 8vo. Lond. 1713.

admired the beauty of her person, and resolved to make an attempt upon her virtue. It is said that he made known to her his passion, on a Sunday morning, after her parents were gone to church. She made an excuse to escape from the room, and immediately fled towards the church; he overtook her on the descent of the hill, and, enraged at his disappointment, drew his sword and struck off her head. The head rolled down the hill to the altar, at which the congregation were kneeling,* and stopping there, a clear and rapid fountain immediately gushed up. St. Beuno snatched up the head, and joining it to the body, it was, to the surprize and admira-

* I have inserted this as I found it in the original, though it does not appear, from any other author, that the church, which Beuno founded, stood where the well now is. I should rather think this must be a mistake.

tion of all present, immediately re-united, the place of separation being only marked by a white line encircling her neck. Cradocus dropped down upon the spot where he had committed this atrocious act; and the legend informs us, that it is not known whether the earth opened to receive his impious corps, or whether his master the devil carried it away; but that it was certainly never seen afterwards. The sides of the well were covered with a sweet scented moss, and the stones at the bottom became tintured with her blood. Drayton, in his *Polyolbion**, says

The lileless tears shee shed into a fountaine turne,
And that for her alone the water should not mourne,
The pure vermilion bloud that issued from her vaines
Unto this very day the pearly gravel stains;

* Page 160.

As

As erst the white and red were mixed in her cheeks,
And that one part of her might be the other like,
Her haire was turn'd to mofse, whose sweetnesse doth
declare

In liveliness of youth the natural sweets she bare.

Wenefride survived her decollation about fifteen years, and having, towards the latter end of that time, received the veil from St. Elerius, at Gwytherin, in Denbighshire, died Abbess of that monastery. There her body rested in quiet for near 500 years, till the reign of King Stephen, when a miracle having been wrought, by her intercession, on a monk at Shrewsbury, the abbot of the convent there determined on the translation of her remains to their monastery, which, after much difficulty and many pretended visions from Heaven, was at last effected, about the year 1138.

The well, after her decease, became endowed with many miraculous properties.

It

It healed the diseases of all who plunged into its water; and Drayton says, that no animal whatever could be drowned in it. The following is one of the numerous miracles recorded of its powerful influence.—Some thieves one night stole a cow from a pasture not far from the well; and that no person might trace them by their footsteps, dragged her along some neighbouring rocks. But mark what followed to the impious wretches; not one step was set without leaving a deep impression in the stones, as if they had been passing over soft clay; nay, even the learned Editor of the life of St. Wenefrede says, that the original describes them as at every step *sinking up to the knees*, which, considering how hard rocks in general are, must have been truly miraculous. The owner, by this means, was enabled to retake his beast; and the terrified robbers, coming penitently to the altar, confessed their crime, and were, no doubt,

doubt, at the intercession of the saint, forgiven.

The sweet-scented moss, growing plentifully on the sides of this well, is nothing more than *Jungermannia asplenoides*, spleenwort *Jungermannia*. It is found in many other springs in the kingdom, and is also occasionally to be met with by the road sides, and in woods in moist places. The supposed tincture of her blood upon the stones at the bottom, is also a vegetable production; *Byssus jolithus* of Linnæus, violet-smelling *Byssus*. Mr. Grose, in his Antiquities, says, that a gentleman, who was educated in this town, informed him that he remembered a person being employed to *paint* the stones against the day of the commemoration of the saint, which is still observed by the Roman Catholics on the 3d of November.*

* Grose's Antiquities, Vol. VII. p. 37.

Dr. Powel * seems justly to ascribe the first invention of this well to the monks of Basingwerk, an abbey about a mile distant, as it is not mentioned by any writer before the foundation of that monastery; even Giraldus Cambrensis, (a man ever ready to relate any wonderful story) though he lodged there a night, in his journey through Wales, in 1187, does not once speak of it.

Of this invention Dr. Fuller † somewhat curiously remarks, that “ if the tip of his
“ tongue who first told, and the top of his
“ fingers who first wrote this damnable
“ lye, had been cut off, and they had both
“ been sent to attend their cure at the
“ shrine of St. Beuno, certainly they would
“ have been more wary, afterwards, how
“ they reported or recorded such impro-
“ bable untruths.”

† Powel's Notes on Itin. Cambriæ Syl. Ger. Cambrense, Lib. II. Cap. X. p. 38.

* Fuller's Worthies of Wales, p. 38.

The Devotees of the saint were formerly very numerous, and the well was so noted that a crowned head of the last age dignified the place with a visit, but of late years they have much fallen off; however, if I may judge from seven crutches and two hand barrows stuck amongst the gothic ornaments of the roof, I should suppose the well was not yet entirely forsaken. Indeed the sanative properties of this water, in common with those of cold baths in general, are not to be disputed, but blindly to attribute to the intercession of a saint those things which from the common course of nature may be accounted for, seems only worthy the ages of ignorance and superstition.

The quantity of water thrown up here is really surprizing, this upon an accurate calculation is found to be not less than *eighty-four hogsheads* every minute. The well has never been known to freeze, and
scarcely

scarcely ever varies in quantity, either in droughts or after the greatest rains. These circumstances render it so valuable in a commercial view, that although it has but little more than a mile to run before it arrives at the sea, the stream works no less than fourteen mills, three of which are in one part of it placed abreast.

Proceeding along the road by the side of the stream for about a mile, till I came to the marsh, and then crossing it to the right, I found myself within sight of Basingwerk Abbey, which stands in a meadow on an eminence just above. These shattered time-worn remains, with the surrounding sycamores, are from some points of view highly picturesque and beautiful.

The ivy now with rude luxuriance bends

It's tangled foliage thro' the cloister'd space,
O'er the green windows mould'ring height ascends,
And fondly clasps it in a last embrace.

The

The little now left is scarcely sufficient to indicate to us what this Abbey has formerly been. The church, which lay on the east side, is totally destroyed. The refectory is pretty entire, and has on one side a great recess, with two round arches, and a plain in front. Above were the cells for the lodgings of the monks, with a small window to each.* The chapel of Knights Templars founded here by Henry II. is spacious and elegant. The brick building, striped with timber, which joins the abbey, and certainly adds nothing to it's beauty, is conjectured, by Mr. Grose,† to have been the Granary.

The situation is delightful, commanding an extensive prospect of the river Dee, Chester, Park-Gate, and the Lancastrian hills.

* Pennant's Tour, I. 25.

† Antiquities of England and Wales.

The architecture of Basingwerk is mixed, being partly Saxon and partly Saracenic, or what is generally called Gothic. The round arches and short massy columns shewing the Saxon, and the narrow pointed windows the Gothic parts.

Tanner * and Dugdale † suppose this abbey to have been founded about 1131 by Ranulph Earl of Chester, and to have been afterwards confirmed by Henry II. and Llewelyn Prince of North Wales: and Mr. Pennant ‡ conjectures it to be of a more ancient date, whilst many of the old writers ascribe the original foundation to Henry II. §

The

* Notitia Monastica.

† Monasticon Anglicanum, I. 720.

‡ Pennant's tour, I. 24.

§ Stow's Annals, 158. Leland's Collectanea, I. 101. According to Henry de Knyghton and John Bromton, it was not founded till after 1150. See Hen. de Knyghton de event. Angliæ, p. 2394.

The value of it's revenues in the 26th of Henry VIII. was according to Dugdale £150. 7s. 3d. and according to Speed £157. 15s. 2d.

Not far from hence stood formerly a strong fort, called Basingwerk Castle, built, as Lord Lyttleton supposes, by one of the Earls of Chester.* In 1157, Henry II. after his escape at Euloe rebuilt this castle, which, in a former reign, had been demolished, having first cleared the passes and cut down the woods around it, which at that time were impenetrable forests.† This

and Chron. Joh. Bromton, p. 1048. Powel in his notes on Gir. Camb. It. Camb. lib. II. c. X. 837, and Bishop Gibson, in his additions to Camd. Flintshire, agree in its being founded so late as 1312.

* Lyttleton's History of Henry II. vol. II. p. 72.

† Matt. Paris. edit. 1684. p. 81. M. S. chronicle from Brutus to the end of the reign of Edward IV. in the Library of St. Peter's College, Cambridge.

fortress

fortress was found to be a disagreeable check upon the Welsh, therefore in 1165 Owen Gwynedd, after many unsuccessful attempts at last took it by storm, and immediately levelled it with the ground.* From this time I have seen nothing more of it as a fortress.

The great dike and fofs, called Wat's Dike, which begins at Maesbury near Oswestry, and passes by Oswestry through Sir Watkin Williams Wynne's grounds at Wynnstay, near Wrexham, Hope and Northop, had it's termination in the Dee near this place. Churchyard the poet is almost the only writer who has not confounded this with Offa's Dike. He assigns as the object of the work that the space between the two was to be free ground, where the Britons and Saxons might meet with safety for all commercial purposes.

* Powel's History of Wales, 223.

There is a famous thing ;
Cal'de Offa's dyke, that reacheth farre in length.
All kind of ware the Danes might thither bring,
It was free ground and cal'de the Britaine's strength.
Wat's dyke likewise, about the same was set,
Betweene which two, the Danes and Britaine's met
And traffic still, but passing bounds by sleight,
The one did take the other pris'ner streight.*

* Churchyard's Worthines of Wales, Edit. 1776. p. 104.



CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

FROM HOLYWELL TO ST. ASAPH. — ROMAN PHAROS—VALE OF CLWYD—ST. ASAPH—CATHEDRAL—MIRACLE—MORTUARIES—EXCURSION TO RHYDDLAN—BATTLE AT MORFA RHYDDLAN—CASTLE—A SIEGE ODDLY RAISED—STATUTE OF RHYDDLAN—ABBAY—DISERTH VILLAGE AND CASTLE—ANECDOTE OF SIR ROBERT POUNDERLING.

THE road from Holywell to St. Asaph is rugged, but pleasant. This country abounds in lead mines, and I passed some very considerable ones about a mile from Holywell. I soon after got a sight of an antient circular building, in form not much unlike a windmill, which stands on the summit of a hill, in the parish of Whit-

ford, betwixt the road and the sea. This Mr. Pennant,* begging his friends would not deem him an *Antiquarian Quixote* for so doing, conjectures to have been a Roman light-house, constructed to direct the navigators to and from *Deva* along the difficult channel of *Seteia Portus*.†

About two miles from St. Asaph, I entered the celebrated vale of Clwyd, and, favoured by a morning serenely bright, the whole scene from the side of the hill appeared to the greatest advantage. Towards the south stood Denbigh, with the shattered remains of its castle crowning the summit of a rocky steep in the middle of the vale; and on the north, clad in its sober hue, I observed the castle of Rhyddlan. The intervening space was enlivened with meadows, woods, cottages, herds, and

* Pennant's Tour, Vol. II. p. 1.

† The Estuary of the Dee.

flocks scattered in every pleasing direction, whilst the whole was bounded by the sea and the dark retiring mountains. This, from the great extent of the picture, is not a scene fitted for the pencil, though its numerous beauties cannot fail in attracting the attention of every lover of nature. When we enter a rugged mountainous scene, where the shelving sides scarcely afford soil for vegetation, and where the whole character is that of savage grandeur, we are struck with astonishment and awe ; but, when nature presents us with a scene like this, which seems to abound with health, fertility, and happiness, every nerve vibrates to the heart the pleasure we receive. Here the pencil fails.

I admire—

None more admires—the painter's magic skill,
Who shows me that which I shall never see,
Conveys a distant country into mine,

F 4

And

And throws Italian light on English walls:
But imitative strokes can do no more
Than please the eye—sweet Nature ev'ry sense.
The air salubrious of her lofty hills,
The cheering fragrance of her dewy vales,
And music of her woods—no works of man
May rival these; they all bespeak a pow'r
Peculiar, and exclusively her own.

After enjoying this scene for some time,
I descended into the vale, crossed the bridge
over the little river Clwyd, and soon after
came to St. Asaph, or, as it is called by the
Welsh, Llan Elwy, *the Church of Elwy*,
a name obtained from its situation on the
bank of the River Elwy, which runs along
the west side of the town. It consists of
little more than a single street, pretty re-
gularly built, up the side of a hill. It has
a cathedral and parish church; and, as a
city, is, except one or two, the smallest in
the kingdom. The cathedral, though
small, is plain and neat. The episcopal
palace

palace is a large and convenient building, and the deanry stands due west from the cathedral, on the opposite side of the Elwy, which runs under the bishop's garden.

Kentigern, Bishop of Glasgow, being driven from Scotland by the persecutions of one of the princes of that nation, fled for safety into Wales. He was here patronized by Cadwallon, uncle to Maelgwn Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, who gave him this place for a residence, where he founded an episcopal seat and monastery, about the year 560, and became himself the first bishop.* Being, sometime afterwards, recalled into Scotland, he nominated

* Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*. Carte's *History of England*, I. 211, 212. Speed says Kentigern founded the monastery, but that Malgo (Maelgwn Gwynedd) made it into an Episcopal See. See his *Cat. of Religious Houses*.

Asaph,

Asaph, or Haffaph, an eminently good and pious man, to be his successor. From this person both the church and place received their names; he died in 596, and was buried in the cathedral.*

In the Norman times, and especially about the reign of Henry I. there was so great a devastation of this part of the country that no Bishop could dwell here; † from this circumstance it is no wonder that Henry of Huntingdon, ‡ in that part of his history which ends at the year 1135, says of Wales, that there remained in it *three* bishoprics, one at St. David's, another at Bangor, and a third at Glamorgan, not mentioning this. Even — Galfrid Arthur,

* Tanner's Notitia.

† Stubbs de Pont. Ebor. p. 1718. Quoted in *Collectanea Curiosa*, by John Gutch, I. 262.

‡ Hist. Henrici Huntingd. apud Camdeni Script. post Bedam.

or, as he is more commonly called, Jeffry of Monmouth, who, in 1138, translated into Latin Tyfilio's History of Britain, written sometime in the seventh century, bringing it down to his own time, does not speak of it.*

It seems, however, to have been repaired about this period, for in 1143, I find a Bishop Gilbert consecrated to this see. Jeffry himself was successor to Gilbert, being made Bishop on 23d of February, 1150.†

About the year 1247, this diocese, with that of Bangor, was entirely destroyed in the wars between Henry III. and the Welsh, and the Bishops were obliged to live for some time upon charitable donations.‡ In 1282 the cathedral was burned

* Collectanea Curiosa, I. 262.

† Matt. West. p. 41.

‡ Matt. Paris, 642.

down,

down, and in about two years afterwards was rebuilt.* But before this took place, Edward I. at the request of Bishop Anian, petitioned the pope to permit the see to be removed to Rhyddlan, which he represented as a place well fortified, alledging the insecurity of its present situation, as being open to all the insults of the Welsh people; at the same time offering both ground for the church and a thousand marks towards the expences of building it.† This design was frustrated, either by the death of the pope, or the exhortation of the archbishop of Canterbury to rebuild the cathedral on its antient site. The roof and upper parts, with the bishop's palace and canons houses, were again destroyed by Owen Glyndwr in 1404, and they remain-

* Willis's Survey of the Cathedral of St. Asaph, 45.

† Rymer's Fœdera, II. 45.

ed in ruins for upwards of seventy years, when they were rebuilt by Bishop Redman.*

During the protectorship of Oliver Cromwell, the post road lying through this place, the palace and cathedral were much injured by the post-master, who had his office in the former, and made great havoc in the choir of the cathedral, using the font as a trough for watering his horses, and, by way of venting his spleen upon the clergy, tying up calves in the Bishop's throne.†

Mr. Grose relates a curious miracle said to have been wrought at this place :—He says that sometime ago a mark used to be shewn on a black stone in the pavement of the street, about the middle of the hill between the two churches ; this, he was in-

* Tanner's Notitia.

† Supplement to Grose's Antiquities.

formed,

formed, was the print of St. Afaph's horse-shoe, when he jumped with him from Onan-Haffa, which is about two miles off; though this, Mr. G. observes, seems rather to have been a miracle performed by the horse than the faint, unless his keeping his feat at such a leap may be deemed one. What was the occasion of this extraordinary jump is not said; whether only to shew the agility of his horse, or to escape the assaults of the foul fiend, who, in those days, took unaccountable liberties even with faints.*

The Diocese of St. Afaph comprehends nearly all Flintshire, Denbighshire, and Montgomeryshire, besides three hundreds in Merionethshire, and a small part of Shropshire. The members of the chapter are the dean, archdeacon, (who is the Bishop) six prebendaries, and seven canons.

* Grose's Antiquities, Vol. VII. p. *43.

And

And besides these there are belonging to the church four vicars choral, four lay clerks or singing men, four choristers, and an organist. At the dissolution of monasteries, in the 26th of Henry VIII. the bishopric was valued at £202. 10s. 6d. in the whole, and £187. 11s. 6d. clear.*

There were formerly at St. Afaph some singular mortuaries due to the Bishop on the decease of every beneficed clergyman within his diocese.

Imprimis. His best gelding, horse, or mare.

Item. His best gown.

Item. His best cloak.

Item. His best coat, jerkin, doublet and breeches.

Item. His hose or nether stockings, shoes, and garters.

Item. His waistcoat.

* Tanner's Notitia.

Item.

Item. His hat and cap.

Item. His falchion.

Item. His best book.

Item. His surplice.

Item. His purse and girdle.

Item. His knife and gloves.

Item. His signet or ring of gold.

These were, by the interest of Bishop Fleetwood, set aside by act of parliament, and the living of Northop was annexed to the bishopric in their stead.*

The tower of the cathedral commands a most extensive prospect of the Vale of Clwyd in every direction; and it is by far the best situation I could meet with for seeing it to advantage. The River Clwyd, from which the vale takes its name, is a diminutive little stream, that meanders along it, scarcely three yards over in the widest part. Its banks are low, and it is after

* Willis's Survey, 280.

sudden rains subject to the most dreadful overflowings, the water, at those times, frequently sweeping along with it even the very soil of the land it passes over. From this circumstance it is that much of the land near its banks is let at very low rents. This vale is perhaps the most extensive in the kingdom, being near twenty-four miles in length and seven in breadth ; and though it is impossible to exhibit a richer or more beautiful scene of fertility, yet, from its great width and its want of water, I believe the painter will prefer to it many of the deep glens and picturesque vales of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire.

From St. Asaph I wandered down the vale towards the little village of Rhyddlan. The country all the way was interesting. At the distance of about a mile I looked back upon the little city I had left: its single street occupied the slope of the hill, at the top of which stood the cathedral,

and the intermingled trees and houses, with the turbulent River Elwy flowing at the bottom, under a majestic bridge of five arches, altogether completed a very beautiful scene.

Rhyddlan * lies in a flat in the middle of the Vale of Clwyd, and on the eastern bank of the river, about two miles from its influx into the sea. This is here so wide as to permit small flat vessels, of about twenty tons burthen, to ride up, at high water, as high as the bridge. Though now a very insignificant village, Rhyddlan has been once a place of great importance, of which however no trace is left, except

* The etymology of this place is thus expressed by Leland, "*Rethelan*, communely caullid *Rudelan*, " cummith of *Rethe*, that ys to say, *roone color*, or "*pale redde*, and *Glan*, that is the *shore*; but *G*, when "*Glan* is set with a word preceding *G*, is exploded."

Itin. V. 53.

the ruins of its castle.* In 1283 it was made a free borough by Edward I. who endowed it with many privileges in order to encourage an intercourse betwixt the Welsh and the English.† From a port, about two miles from this place, where the river discharges itself into the sea, much corn and timber are annually exported.

Below the town is a large marsh, called Morfa Rhyddlan, *the Marsh of Rhyddlan*, where, in 795, was fought a dreadful battle betwixt the Welsh, under their leader Caradoc, and the Saxon forces under Offa King of Mercia. The Welsh were defeated, and their commander slain; in addition to this severe loss the Saxon prince cruelly ordered all the men and children,

* “ Non procul a mari Rudlana in Tegenia olim
“ magnus urbs, nunc exiguus vicus situatur.”

Lhuyd Comment. Brit. 56.

† Carte, II. 196

who unfortunately fell into his hands, to be massacred in cold blood ; the women themselves scarcely escaping his fury.*

The memory of this tragical event has been carried down to posterity by a ballad, supposed to have been composed soon after the battle, called *Morfa Rhyddlan*, the air of which is most tenderly plaintive.†

The castle is of red stone, nearly square, and having six towers, two at each of two opposite corners and only one at each of the others. One of these was called *Twr y Brenin*, *the King's Tower*. The whole was surrounded by a double ditch on the north,

* Powel's History of Wales, 20. Matt. Paris, *bita duorum offarum*, 976. Warrington's History of Wales, p. 105.

† See this air amongst the specimens of Welsh music in the second volume of this work. It is the general opinion in Wales, that this air was composed thus early, but from its construction it appears to me to be of a much later date.

and

and a strong wall and fofs all round. In this wall is a tower, called Twr y Silod, yet ftanding. The principal entrance was from the north-west, flanked by two round towers. The two oppofite to thefe are very much fhattered, but the remainder are pretty entire.

This caftle, according to Powel and Camden,* was built by Llewelyn ap Sitfylv, who reigned in Wales from 1015 to 1020, and made this the place of his refidence. But Dugdale and Carte † both fay, that it was erected by Robert de Rhyddlan, nephew and lieutenant to Hugh Earl of Chefter, in the reign of William the Conqueror, in order to refrain the excursions of the Welch, and that he was placed

* Ann. Povei Gir. Camb. X. Itin. Camb. Lib. II. c. 10. p. 873. Gough's Camd. II. 588.

† Dugdale's Baronage, I. 36. Carte's Hiftory of Engl. I. 466.

there with sufficient forces to check them. This, however, certainly cannot have been the case, for in 1063, three years before William came to the crown, it was in the possession of Gryffydd ap Llewelyn, Prince of Wales, for in that year it was attacked and burnt by Harold, son of Godwin Earl of Kent, who was afterwards king of England, in retaliation for some depredations committed by the Welsh on the English borders. The Welsh prince was apprized of his danger but a moment before the English presented themselves at the gates, and as the only means of escaping the hands of his enemies, threw himself with a few of his attendants into one of his ships, at that time ready in the harbour, and by that means fortunately for himself got off.*

* Matt. Westm. 429. Annot. Povel. Gir. Camb. It. Camb. Lib. II. c. X. 873. Warrington's History of Wales, 221.

It seems not to have remained long in ruins, for in 1098, it appears to have been again taken from the Welsh by the above Robert, surnamed from the event *De Rhyddlan*, who, it seems, did not build, but added many new works to it.* The two authors, quoted above, may probably have mistaken between building and fortifying, unless we are to suppose that he entirely rebuilt it, which may have been the case, though I think the other account carries with it the greater degree of probability. Be this as it may, it is certain that he was stationed here to repel the attacks of the Welsh; and whilst upon this post, *Gryffydd ap Conan*, Prince of Wales, petitioned him for aid against his enemies, which was obtained; but, on some quarrel, he attacked him in his castle, took and burnt the bailey or

* Gough's *Camd.* II. 588.

yard, and slew so great a number of his men, that very few escaped into the towers.* It was afterwards repaired and fortified by Henry II. who gave it to Hugh Beauchamp;† notwithstanding which, in 1167, whilst Henry was engaged in foreign affairs, it was attacked by Owen Gwynedd and his brother Cadwalader, assisted by Rysse ap Gryffydd, and after a blockade of two months, surrendered to them.‡ It must, not long after, have been delivered to the English, for about 1214, in the reign of King John, it was attacked and taken, without much opposition, by the Welsh Prince Llewelyn ap Jouverth, and is mentioned as being the last fortress which that monarch

* Pennant, II. 11. who quotes the Life of Gryffydd ap Knyan, in Sebright MSS.

† Matt. Paris, 81. Powel, 208. Peterhouse, MS.

‡ Powel, 224. Lyttleton's History of Henry II. Vol. II. 493.

held in this country, the Welsh having now entirely driven him out.*

Towards the latter end of the reign of Richard I. Ranulph Blundeville † Earl of Chester, being unexpectedly attacked by the Welsh in this castle, sent to Roger Lacy (for his fierceness surnamed *Hell*) his Constable of Chester, to hasten to his relief with such forces as he could on the sudden collect. It happened to be on Midsummer Day when there was a fair at Chester, and Roger immediately got together a mob of fiddlers, players, cobblers, and other idle fellows, and marched towards Rhyddlan. Llewelyn, who was at the head of the Welsh, observing at a distance an immense crowd of people, and supposing that it was

* Powel, 270. Wynne's History of Wales, 237.

† Or Blondeville. This addition was taken to his name of Ranulph from his having been born at Oswestry, in Shropshire, which was antiently called *Album Monasterium*.

the English army coming upon him, immediately raised the siege and fled. In memory of this service the Earl, by charter, granted to Roger Lacy and his heirs the government over all the above description of people in the County of Chester, which government was afterwards, in part, granted by his son to Hugh Dutton, his steward, and his heirs, by the following deed.

“ Sciant præsentēs et futuri, quod ego,
 “ Johannes Constabularius *Cestriæ*, dedi et
 “ concessi et hac præsentī mea charta con-
 “ firmavi *Hugoni de Dutton* et hæredibus
 “ suis, magistratum omnium * *leccatorum*
 “ et *meretricum* totius *Cester-shirix*, sicut
 “ liberius illum magistratum teneo de
 “ comite. Salvo jure meo, mihi et hære-
 “ dibus meis.”

* Mr. Pennant has mistaken this word for *peccatorum*. See his *Tour*, II. 12. Blount, in his *Law Dictionary*, has *Leccator*, a riotous, debauched person.

This

This instrument is without a date, but was given sometime about the year 1220. The heirs of Hugh Dutton claimed so late as the reign of Henry VII. "*de qualibet meretrice infra commitatum Cestrie et infra Cestriam manente, et officium suum exercente,*" an annual payment of fourpence. They also claimed, from antient custom, that all the minstrels of Cheshire and the City of Chester should appear before them, or their stewards, every year, on the feast of St. John the Baptist, and there present four flaggons of wine and a lance, and each of them to pay for their licence fourpence-halfpenny. This latter claim is, I believe, in some measure continued till this present time.*

* Dugdale's Baronage, I. 101. Blount's Tenures, by Beckwith, 300, where are quoted Sir Peter Leicester's Antiquities of Cheshire, 141, 142, 151, and Burn's Justice, tit. *Vagrants*.

After

After the surrender of Rhyddlan Castle to the Welsh in the reign of King John, they seem to have had possession of it for many years, for the first time I see any thing of it afterwards is in the reign of Edward I. when, upon the refusal of Llewelyn ap Gryffydd to do homage to Edward at Chester, that monarch, at the head of an army, marched into Wales, and amongst others took this castle, obliging the prince to come to terms. He then fortified it and placed in it a strong garrison.* Llewelyn knowing of how much consequence this place was, and how dangerous it was to his interest whilst it remained in the hands of an enemy, in the year 1281, in conjunction with his brother David, made a most vigorous attack upon

* Matt. Westm. 370. Tho. Walsingham, 6. Holinshed's Chronicle, II. 278, 279. Powel's History of Wales, 334.

it,

it, but the English army approaching, they were forced to retire to their fastnesses amongst the mountains in Caernarvonshire.*

Shortly after this it was taken by Ryfe, son of Maelgon, and Gryffydd ap Meredith ap Owen,† though it seems as if they had abandoned it soon afterwards on the arrival of the king, who appears to have resided here in 1283, for it was in this year that he held a parliament here, in which was passed, amongst other statutes, that called the *Statute of Rbyddlan*. This statute contained a set of regulations made by the king in council for the government of Wales, which the preamble states to

* Tho. Walsingham, 9. Holingshed's Chron. II. 280. Matt. West, p. 370, says, that they took, and afterwards demolished it, which could not possibly have been the case.

† Grose's Antiquities.

have

have been then totally subdued. It contains also many curious particulars with regard to the customs which prevailed in Wales previous to Edward's conquest, some of which were retained, others altered, and some entirely abolished, by this statute.*

Edward I. at Rhyddlan, assembled the barons and chief men of Wales, to inform them that he had appointed for them a prince, such as they had long expressed a desire to have, a native of their own country, one who could not speak the English language, and whose life and conduct had been hitherto irreproachable. On their acclamations of joy and promise of obedience, he invested in the principality his own son Edward, afterwards Edward II. an infant, who had not long before been born at Caernarvon.†

* See Statutes at large. † Stow's Annals, 203.

After

After the death of Llewelyn Prince of Wales, David his brother was taken prisoner by the English army, and with his wife and two sons was sent to this castle, from whence, not long afterwards, he was taken to Shrewsbury, where he was executed for high treason.*

In 1399 it was seized by the Earl of Northumberland, previous to the deposition of Richard II. who dined here in company with that earl, in his way to Flint, where he was delivered into the power of his enemy Bolingbroke.†

In the civil wars Rhyddlan castle was garrisoned for the king, but was surrendered on the 28th of July, 1646, to General Mytton,‡ and on the 22d of December, in the same year, was ordered by the parlia-

* Tho. Walsingham, 12. Holinshed's Chron. II. 282.

† Stow's Annals, 321.

‡ Whitelock's Memorials, 217.

ment to be dismantled.* The property of it is at present in the crown.

The burgesſes of Rhyddlan contribute towards electing a member of parliament for Flint. Thoſe who are qualified inhabit the place and that part of the pariſh called *Rhyddlan Franchiſe*, which extends above a mile from the town.†

Near the caſtle was a houſe of Black Friars, founded ſometime before 1268, for in that year Anian, who is related to have been a prior of this houſe, was made Biſhop of St. Aſaph. It ſuffered much in the wars between Edward I. and Llewelyn, but recovered and ſubſiſted till the diſſolution; though it does not appear in the valuations either of Dugdale or Speed. I did not obſerve, when I was at this place,

* Whitelock, 231.

† Pennant's Tour, II. 15.

whether

whether any part of the building was remaining.*

Camden † relates a strange circumstance concerning the River Clwyd at its influx into the sea. He says that, “below the
“castle, the river is discharged into the
“sea, and though the valley, at the mouth
“of the river, *seems* lower than the sea,
“yet it is never overflowed; but by a natural, though an invisible impediment,
“the water stands on the very brink of
“the shore, to our just admiration of the
“Divine Providence.” If the marsh only *appears* lower than the sea, without being so, there certainly seems no wonder at all.

* Tanner's Notitia. Mr. Brown Willis, in his Survey of Bangor, p. 357, says, it was reported that there was an abbey here, the religious of which were of a military order.

† Gibb. Camd. 688.

The village of Diferth is about two miles and a half east of Rhyddlan, the church stands in a romantic bottom, and is finely overshadowed with several large yew trees growing around it. In the church-yard are many very singular tomb-stones; but two in particular attracted my attention, as being not, as usual, altar-shaped, but having a semicircular stone upon the top of each of them. They are of an antient date, and belong to a family of the name of Hughes. Here is also a curious and much ornamented old pillar, whose use I could form no idea of.

The castle stands on the summit of a high lime-stone rock, at the distance of half a mile from the village. Its present remains are very trifling, being nothing more than a few shattered fragments. From hence there is a fine prospect of part of the Vale of Clwyd.

Diferth

Diferth Castle,* which was, most probably, the last of the chain of British posts on the Clwydian hills, was formerly called also Din-colyn, _____ Castell y Ffailon, _____ Castell Gerri, _____ and Castell y Craig, *the Castle of the Rock.*† The time of its foundation is not known. It was fortified by Henry III. about 1241,‡ and it appears to have been the property of the Earls of Chester, for Dugdale, at the end of his ac-

* “Thifarte, or Difarte Castelle, yn Flintshire, “by the name yn Walsche is thus expounded:— “*Thi is privativa particula, as not; farte is steepe up; “not stepe or clining up, that is to say, playne.*” See *Leland's Itin.* V. 53.

I should rather suppose it derived from *dy* very, and *ferth*, steep, as it does not stand upon a plain, but upon a considerable eminence.

† Pennant, II. 7, who quotes Llwyd's Itinerary, MSS.

‡ Powel, 307.

count of that family, remarks that, upon its becoming extinct, Diferth and Diganwy castles were, in 31st Henry III. both annexed to the crown.* About twenty years after this it was, along with Diganwy, destroyed by Llewelyn ap Gryffydd.†

On the Castle-hill I found the following plants growing in plenty:—*Beronica spicata*, *Cistus marifolius*, *Cistus beleanthemum*, *Thalictrum minus*, *Geranium sanguineum*, *Conyza squarrosa*, and *Carduus marianus*, with some others not so rare.

In a field, a little to the south of it, I observed a ruinous building, called Siamberwen, *the White-Hall*, said to have been the house of Sir Robert Pounderling, a valiant knight, who was many years ago the Con-

* Dugdale's Baronage, I. 48.

† Matt. Paris, 851. Matt. Westm. 316. Powel, 326.

stable of the Castle.* Of this illustrious hero Leland † relates a story, that being for his valour noted far and near, he was challenged, at a tournament, by a gentleman of Wales, who in the combat struck out one of his eyes; but, being afterwards in the English court requested to challenge him in return, he wisely shewed that he had prudence as well as valour by declining a second combat, alledging as his excuse, that he did not intend the Welshman to knock out his other eye.

From this place I retraced my road back again, through Rhyddlan, to St. Asaph, from whence, the next morning, I set off to Conway. I must here remark that, in the latter part of this day's excursion, from Rhyddlan to Diferth, I received but little

* Pennant, II. 8, who quotes Llwyd's Itinerary, MS.

† Leland's Itinerary, VI. 21.

amusement, except in my botanical pursuits. Neither the village of Diferth, nor its castle, afford any thing very deserving of attention.



CHAP.

CHAP. V.

FROM ST. ASAPH TO CONWY.—ABERGELEY—
LLANDULAS—PENMAEN RHOS—RIVER CONWY
—FERRY—PEARL FISHERY—TOWN OF CONWY—
CASTLE—CHURCH—INSCRIPTION—ABBEY—
PLAS-MAWR—GLODDAETH—DIGANWY.

MY next stage was Conwy. The road now became rather more hilly, but it was hard and good, and the surrounding country, for the most part, very pleasant. After passing Abergeley, a small village, about seven miles from St. Asaph, I had the sea on the right, and a range of low rocks on the left of the road. From the bottoms of these were all the way meadows

and corn fields, which extended nearly to the water. Beyond Llandulas, *the dark village*, the road winds round a huge limestone rock, called Penmaen Rhos.

Mr. Pennant * conjectures that it was in some of the deep bottoms of this neighbourhood that Richard II. was surprized by a band of armed ruffians, placed there by the Earl of Northumberland, for the purpose of betraying him into the hands of Bolingbroke at Flint.

I was wandering leisurely along this road, when on a sudden, a most magnificent landscape burst upon the sight. The fine old town of Conwy, with its gloomy walls and towers, appeared, with the wide river in front, and backed by the vast Caernarvonshire mountains.

The River Conwy, the *Conovius* of Antoninus, runs on this, the east side of the

* Tour, II. 334.

town. It is here about half a mile over, and is crossed by a ferry. I have been told of many shameful impositions that are continually practised by the ferrymen at this place upon strangers. Their charges ought to be a *penny* for every person on foot, *two-pence* for a man and horse, and *half-a-crown* a wheel for carriages. Instead of which, I even once saw them myself, with the most impudent assurance possible, charge half-a-guinea for a gig, and after that importune for liquor. They are, besides, so much their own masters that, I am told, they will only take over the boat when they think proper, and in this manner persons have been frequently delayed in their journey three, four, or more hours, without the possibility on their part of preventing it. Whether these enormities are known to the renter of the ferry, who, I understand resides at Conwy, I cannot tell, but if they are, it is certainly his duty to watch his
servants

servants more strictly, and prevent their practising such shameful impositions upon the public.

The River Conwy was formerly noted for being a pearl fishery; and pearls have been taken here, at different times, ever since the Roman conquest. Suetonius says, that to get these was one of the chief motives alledged for his invasion of this island. The British and Irish pearls are found in a shell-fish, called by Linnæus * *Mya Margaritefera*, the *Pearl Muscle*, peculiar to stony and rapid rivers. The pearls are said to be produced from a disease in the fish somewhat analogous to the stone in the human

* GEN. CHAR. Shell bivalve, gaping at one end. Hinge with a broad thick tooth not let into the opposite valve.

SPEC. CHAR. Shape oval, bending in on one side. Shell thick, opaque, and heavy. Tooth of the hinge smooth and conical. The length five or six inches, and breadth about $2\frac{1}{4}$.

body.

body. On being squeezed they will eject them, and they often cast them spontaneously in the sand of the stream. There have been sometimes so many as sixteen taken in one shell. Pearls got here have sold for four guineas each, and one for ten, which was afterwards purchased by Lady Glenleah, who put it into a necklace, and refused *eighty pounds* for it from the Duchess of Ormond. A notion prevails that Sir Richard Wynne, of Gwydir, chamberlain to Catherine Queen of Charles II. presented her majesty with a pearl taken in this river, which is to this day honoured with a place in the regal crown.*

A more beautiful or more picturesque town can scarcely be found than Conwy.†

The

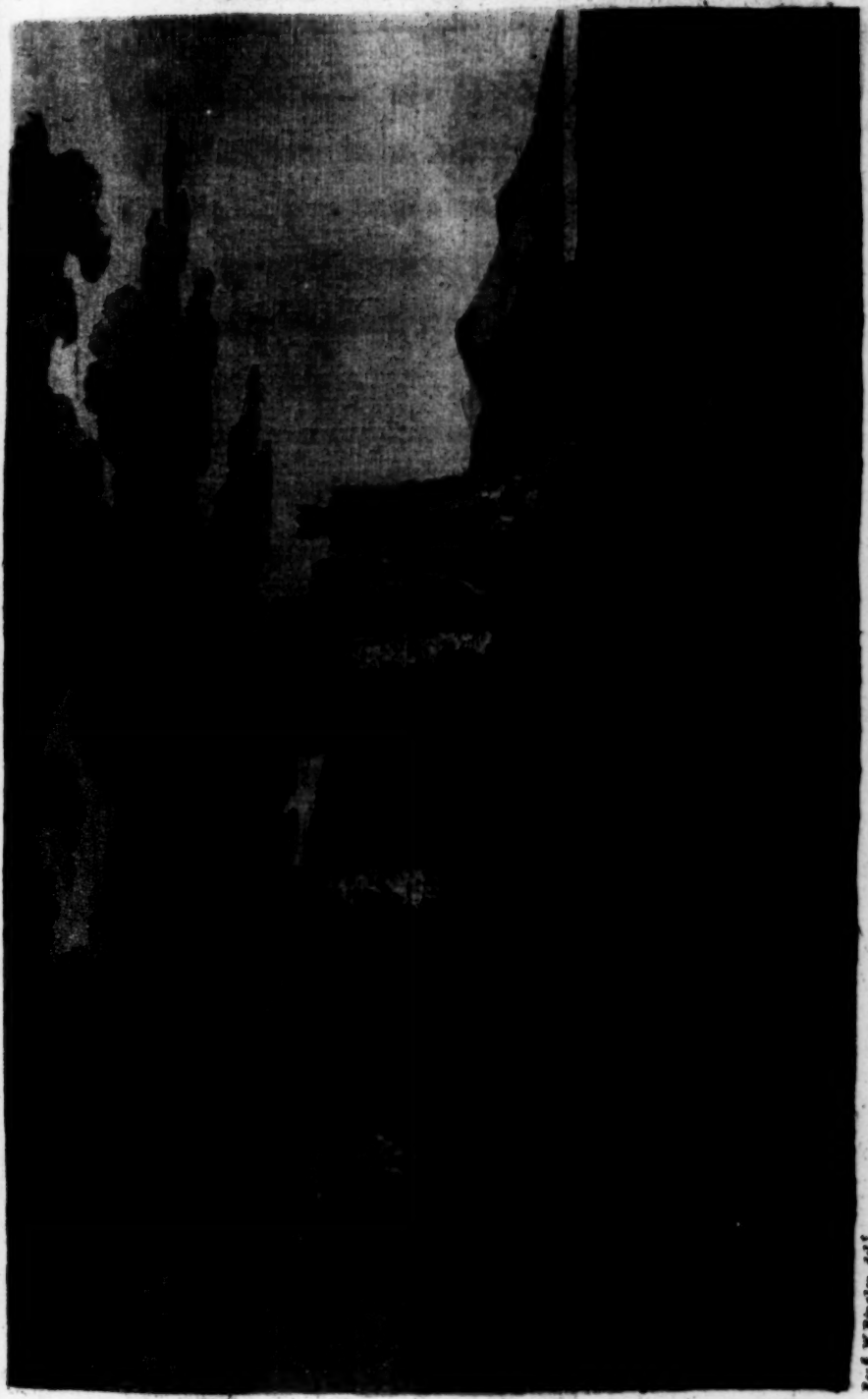
* Philosophical Transactions abridged, II. 831.
Pennant's Zoology, IV. 80.

† It has been conjectured by many, that this present Conwy was the *Conovium* of the Romans; this, however, appears to have been without any foundation,

The castle stands upon a rock, two sides of which are washed by the river. Its architecture and position are truly grand, and denote the spirit and judgment of its founder, Edward I. From each end of the town walls, fronting the river, a curtain terminated with a round tower ran to some distance into the water, the more effectually to prevent the approach of an enemy from thence. The heap of rubbish at present left, nearly opposite to the end of the castle,

tion, for it has been, I think, clearly proved, that Conovium was situated where *Caer Rhun* (a corruption from *Caer Hên*, the old city) now stands, on the west side of the river, about five miles higher up. At this place, now an insignificant village, many Roman antiquities have, at different times, been discovered; and out of the ruins of this, Camden conjectures, that Edward built the *new town*, at the mouth of the river, which was from thence called *Aber Conwy*, the *conflux of the Conwy*. It is now generally called *Conway*. See *Camden's Britannica*.

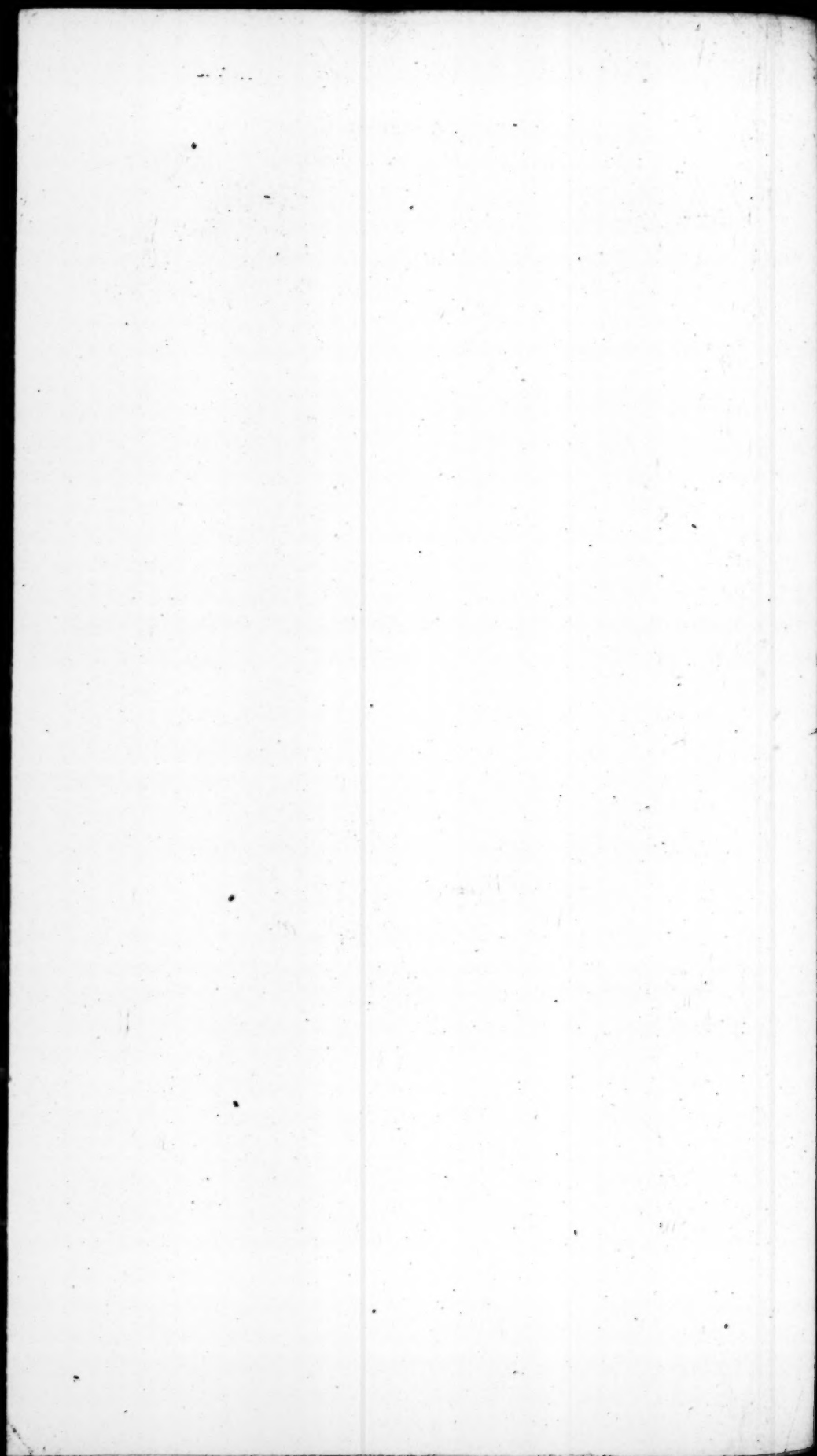
is



CONWY CASTLE.

J. Allen. Photo.

Rev. W. Douglas. del.



is the remains of one of these towers, the other has been long since entirely destroyed. The castle was defended also by eight large round towers flanking the sides and the ends, from each of which issued, formerly, a slender turret, rising much above, constructed for commanding an extensive prospect over the adjacent country; of these turrets there are only four now remaining. The walls are embattled, and from twelve to fifteen feet in thickness, and yet nearly entire, except one of the middle towers on the south side, whose lower part has fallen down the rock, owing to the folly of some of the inhabitants who had taken away the stones from the foundation for their own use. The upper part of the tower is entire, suspended at a vast height above, and projecting near thirty feet over the walls below, exhibiting, observes Mr. Pennant, "in the breach such vast strength of walling, as might have given to the architect
" the

“ the most reasonable hope that his work
“ would have endured to the end of time.”

The chief entrance into the castle is at the north-west end, formerly over a deep trench, by a draw-bridge. There was also at the other end another from the river, up a rock, protected by the projecting curtain.

The hall is the most remarkable apartment now left ; it is a hundred and thirty feet long, thirty-two broad, and about twenty-two in height. It was lighted by nine windows, six of which were towards the river, and three towards the court ; and the roof was once supported by eight Gothic arches, some of which are still left.

Edward I. after his conquest of the Welsh, with his queen, and great part of the English nobility, spent a Christmas at this castle in all the joyous festivity that a
luxurious

luxurious court could boast. But what a change has taken place since that time!

What now avails that o'er the vassal plain
His rights and rich demesnes extended wide,
That honor and her knights composed his train,
And chivalry stood marshall'd by his side.

Though to the clouds his castle seem'd to climb,
And frown'd defiance on the desperate foe;
Though deem'd invincible, the conqueror, Time,
Levell'd the fabric as the founder low.

Yet the hoar tyrant, though not mov'd to spare,
Relented when he struck its finish'd pride,
And partly the rude ravage to repair,
The tott'ring towers with twisted ivy tied.

The walls around this town,* which are
built upon the solid rock, and betwixt
twelve

* The mode of defending a town, before the introduction of gunpowder and artillery, was by a number of small towers, capable of containing twenty or thirty men each, flanking and defending the
the

twelve and fifteen feet in thickness, are nearly entire. Within, the houses are very irregular, but by no means bad. The church, said to have been the conventual church belonging to the monastery, is a mean-looking building. I observed in it a few modern monuments belonging to the family of the Wynnes, formerly of this place; and, amongst others, the following singular inscription on the tomb of a Mr. Hookes:

“ Here lyeth the body of Nicholas
“ Hookes, of Conwy, Gent. who was the
“ *forty-first* child of his father, William
“ Hookes, Esq. by Alice his wife; and
“ father of *twenty-seven* children; who
“ died the 20th day of March, 1637.”

the intermediate curtains of the walls with long and cross bows and other manual weapons; for few of them were large enough to contain the projectile machines of those times.

There

There are some poor remains of the Cistercian Abbey, founded here by Llewelyn ap Iorwerth Prince of Wales, in 1185, who endowed it with many privileges, amongst which was the exemption of the monks from maintaining, for the prince, any men, horses, dogs, or hawks. The abbots were to be elected by the monks, without the controul or interference of any other persons whatever. They were to have the benefit of all wrecks on the shores of their property, and to be toll free.* In this convent, and that of Stratflur in Cardiganshire, were kept the records of the successions and acts of the princes of Wales from 1126 till the year 1270.† The founder was buried here, but on the dissolution his

* Dugdale's Monasticon, I. 918, 920. Tanner's Notitia Mon. Leland's Collectanea de reb. Brit. I. 103.

† Powel's History of Wales, 206.

coffin was removed to Llanrust, a town about twelve miles distant. In this abbey was also interred Conan ap Owen Gwynedd,* wrapped in the habiliments of a monk, which, in those superstitious days, was deemed a coat of mail proof against every power of Satan.†

Edward I. upon building the castle and fortifying the town, removed the religious of this convent to Maynan, in Denbighshire, a place about three miles up the river, where he had founded for them another abbey, reserving to the monks all their former lands and privileges. He also reserved to them the presentation of their conventual church at Conwy, now made parochial, provided they found two able and worthy Englishmen as chaplains, and a third a Welshman, for the benefit of those who did not understand English. One of

* He died in the year 1200. † Powel, 225.

the Englishmen was perpetual vicar, who, on every vacancy, was to be named by the convent, and presented by the diocesan.*

Plas mawr, *the great mansion*, is an antique-looking house, built, in the year 1585, by Robert Wynne, Esquire, of Gwydir. On the house are the letters I.H.S. X.P.S. and over the gateway, the Greek words *Ανεχε, ανεχε, bear, forbear*. The apartments are ornamented in a rude stile, with uncouth figures in stucco.

The castle of Conwy was erected in the year 1283 by Edward I. who, at the same time, built the walls of the town, and repaired several of his other castles in Wales, in order to guard against the insurrections of Llewelyn, which for some years before had been very frequent. It was built upon a spot which had formerly been fortified by Hugh Earl of Chester, in the time of Wil-

* Dugdale's Monasticon, I. 921.

liam the Conqueror,* in a situation highly proper, having a complete command of the river, and by its vicinity to the strong pass of Penmaen Mawr, enabling the king's troops to occupy it on the least commotion, thereby securing a road to the interior of the mountains and to the Isle of Anglesea.

I am rather at a loss to judge whether it was this castle or that of Diganwy, about three miles north of it, that was called *Snowdon Castle*. Leland,† indeed, in his *Collectanea*, says “The *Castel of Snowdon*” “is oftentimes put by a common worde” “for *Conwey*,” but several circumstances have occurred that induce me rather to suppose, that this was not the case, and that

* Matt. Westm. 371. Holinshed's Chronicle, II, 282.

† Coll. de reb. Brit. I. 472.

Diganwy

Diganwy must formerly have been called Snowdon Castle.*

Edward I. once found himself very disagreeably situated in this castle. He with a few of his men had preceded the body of his army a little way, and even crossed the river before they came up. Soon after he had got over, the tide flowed in and prevented *them* from following, which the Welsh perceiving, attacked him and his handful of men in the castle, who were driven to great distress, having no kind of provision whatever, except a little honey and water. But by the strength of the castle, and their own bravery, they were en-

* Dolbadain Castle, near Llanberis, being situated in the heart of the mountains, might with greater propriety than either of these have been called *Snowdon Castle*; but the old English writers, from its obscurity, had probably never heard of it, or if they had, they do not seem to have known it by this name.

abled to hold out till the water again retired, and the army came over to their relief.*

In 1399, Richard II. in his return from Ireland, having landed in Wales, heard that the Duke of Lancaster had prepared immense forces against him, and despairing in the strength of his own army, in company with about a dozen of his friends, stole in the night to Conwy, where he hoped to be more secure; this, however, he scarcely found the case, for he was shortly afterwards drawn from thence by the insinuating treachery of the villain Percy.†

Richard III. in the first or second year of his reign, granted “ to Thomas Tunstall, Esq. the office of Constable of the Castel of Conway, with the Captainship of the Towne of Conway, and to have under him the number of twenty-four

* Hen. de Knyghton de event. Angl. 2471.

† Stow's Annals, 322. Carte's History of England.

“ soldiers

“ soldiers for the time of his life, with the
“ wages and fees to the same office and
“ captaynship due and accustomed, and to
“ have for every of the said soldiers 4*d.* by
“ the day.”*

The castle was repaired and fortified for Charles I. in the civil wars, by Dr. Williams, Archbishop of York, at the king's particular request. He faithfully promised the Archbishop, upon his doing this, that it should remain in the care of himself, or any person appointed by him, till the money expended was repaid. After it was finished, several country gentlemen requested him to receive into it their writings, plate, and other valuables, which he, relying upon the king's promise, did, giving to every owner a receipt, by which he made himself liable to the loss. In May, 1645,

* MS. N^o. 433, in Bib. Harl. quoted in Grose's Antiquities.

about a year afterwards, Sir John Owen, a colonel in the king's service, obtained of Prince Rupert a commission, appointing him governor of the castle. By virtue of this he surprized and took it, dispossessing the Archbishop, notwithstanding the king's positive promise to the contrary ; and he refused to give him any security for the valuables he had in charge. After this circumstance the Archbishop, being invited by General Mytton, came over to the side of the parliament, and assisted in person, along with the parliament's army, and many of the country people, whose goods had been lodged there, in attacking the castle. After a siege of three months, it was taken on the 18th of November, 1646, and the property of every person was justly restored to him. Mytton, who had a most cruel antipathy against the Irish, ordered all who were seized in the castle to be tied back to back, and

and flung into the river.* For his late services the parliament granted the Archbishop a general pardon, and a release from all his sequestrations.

After the restoration a grant was made of this fortress, by the king, to Edward Earl of Conwy, who, in 1665, ordered all the iron, timber, and lead to be taken down and transported to Ireland, under the pretence that it was to be used in his majesty's service. Several of the principal gentlemen of the country opposed the design, but their remonstrances were over-ruled, and this noble pile was reduced nearly to its present condition.† It is now held from the crown at an annual rent of six shillings and eight-

* Whitelock's Memorials, 219, 228. Rushworth's Historical Collections, part IV. vol. I. 297.

† Pennant's Tour, II. 319. See also a copy of a Letter in the Appendix to the same volume, p. 478.

pence,

pence, and a dish of fish, to Lord Hertford, as often as he passes through the town.*

Edward I. made Conwy a free borough, and ordered that the mayor, who was the constable of the castle for the time being, should preserve its privileges. It is at present governed by one alderman, a recorder, coroner, water-bailiff, and two serjeants at mace, chosen annually. The privileges here, as in all other English garrisons in North Wales, extended from Caernarvon to the River Clwyd; for none could be convicted of any crime, within that district, but by a jury empaneled within it.†

Situated on the side of a hill, about three miles north of Conwy ferry, is Gloddaeth, the beautiful seat of Sir Thomas Mostyn, Bart. built by his ancestor, Sir Roger Mos-

* Grose's Antiquities, vol. VII. p. 18.

† Pennant, II. 314.

tyn,

tyn, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a place, as I have been informed, surrounded with charming scenery and rare plants. About half a mile beyond this is Diganwy, an antient castle, founded about the time of the Norman conquest, and near it a circular watch tower, said to have been built sometime in the latter part of the last century. But from not having heard of these curiosities, when I was in this part of the country, I had not an opportunity of seeing them.



CHAP. VI.

FROM CONWY BY BANGOR TO CAERNARVON.—
ROCKS—PENMAEN MAWR—ROAD—SINGULAR
ACCIDENTS — BRITISH FORT—ABER — WATER-
FALL—LLANDYGAI—PENRHYN—BANGOR—CAS-
TLE—CATHEDRAL—CONVENT—BANGOR FERRY
—INN—HARP—FINE SCENERY—CAERNARVON—
HOTEL.

HAVING left Conwy in my route to Bangor, I now began to find myself in a truly mountainous and romantic country, for the hills of Flintshire and Denbighshire, which I had just passed, bear no comparison for picturesque beauty, with the

the rocky scenes of Caernarvonshire.* Instead of being as those were gentle in ascent, and frequently covered with grass and turf to their summits, they now began to wear the savage and majestic face of Nature—they were precipitous, rugged and gloomy.

A few miles beyond Conwy is the celebrated mountain called Penmaen Mawr, a huge rock, rising near 1550 feet in perpendicular height above the sea. Along a shelf of this tremendous precipice is formed an excellent road, well guarded towards the sea by a strong wall, and supported in many

* Before the division of Wales into counties this county was called Snowdon Forest, and in after-times Arvonja, from its situation opposite Mon, Bon or Anglesea. It is about 50 miles in length, 25 in breadth, and 130 in circumference; is divided into seven cantreds or hundreds, and sixty-eight parishes. It contains about 370,000 acres of land, and the population is calculated at about 16,800. In it are one city and four market towns.

parts

parts by arches turned underneath it, a method in the expence found far preferable to that of hollowing it out of the solid rock. Before the wall was built, accidents were continually happening by people falling down the precipices; but since that time, I believe it has been perfectly safe.

Of these accidents, Mr. Pennant * has recorded the following: An exciseman fell from the highest part, and escaped unhurt. The Rev. Mr. Jones, who in 1762, was rector of Llanlian, in Anglesea, fell with his horse, and a midwife behind him down the steepest part. The female perished as did the nag, but the Divine, with great philosophy, unsaddled the steed, and marched off with the trappings, exulting at his own preservation.

“ I have often heard,” continues this intelligent author “ of another accident attend-

* Tour II. 305.

“ ed with such romantic circumstances,
“ that I would not venture to mention it
“ had I not the strongest traditional au-
“ thority, to this day in the mouth of
“ every one in the parish of Llanfair Vech-
“ an, in which this promontory stands.
“ Above a century ago, Scôn Humphries,
“ of this parish, made his addressee to Ann
“ Thomas, of Creyddyn, on the other side
“ of Conwy river. They had made an
“ appointment to meet at a fair in the town
“ of Conwy. He in his way fell over
“ Penmaen Mawr; she was overset in the
“ ferry-boat, and was the only person saved
“ out of more than fourscore. They were
“ married, and lived very long together in
“ the parish of Llanfair. She was buried,
“ April 11, 1744, aged 116. He survived
“ her 5 years, died December 10, 1749,
“ and was buried close by her, in the pa-
“ rish church yard, where their graves are
“ familiarly shewn to this day.”

At

At some distance the road appears like a white line along the side of the rock, which towards the sea is in many places so nearly perpendicular, that a stone may be thrown from thence into it without touching below, a height of almost a hundred and forty feet. The pass would, were it not for the wall, be truly terrible; and even yet, to those who can make frights to mock themselves, the amazingly lofty abrupt precipice of rock, towering overhead with the fragments and ruins, that have for ages been falling down from it, and seem ready to roll over one, do present a scene of horror.

Before this pass was formed, the usual mode of going from Conwy to Bangor was either in boats, or to wait the departure of the tide and proceed along the sands, at low water, a mode frequently attended with danger, owing to the tide's sometimes forming hollows, of the depth of which, when
filled

filled with water, the guides cannot always be certain.

I did not ascend to the summit of Penmaen Mawr, though I have since understood that there is at the top called Braich y Ddinas, *the arm of the city*, an antient British fortification, in the walls of which, according to the additions to Camden, * were formerly at least a hundred towers all round, of equal size, and about six yards in diameter within. From it's situation, a hundred men might here have defended themselves against a great army, and it was large enough to contain twenty thousand soldiers. Of this fortress, though I understand very little is left, yet there is sufficient to shew that it has once been a very extensive and important place. Governor Pownall, who examined it many years ago with great care, contrary

* Gibson's Camden, 673.

to the received opinion, conjectures that it has been one of the Druids' consecrated high places of worship, and never intended for a place of defence. In the inclosure, he says, is a barrow of the kind which Dr. Stukely calls a long barrow, and ascribes to the sepulture of an Arch-Druid.* I however am inclined, from the circumstances mentioned by Edward Llwyd, Mr. Pennant, and other able writers (without having seen it myself) to credit the other opinion, for from them there seems every evidence of its having been a British fort.

About nine miles from Conwy stands the pleasing little village of Aber, *the confluence*. Here I found a comfortable little Inn, which from its situation near Penmaen Mawr, may be a very convenient place to ascend that mountain from, to such as wish

* See a paper of the Governor in Archæol. of the Society of Antiquaries, III. 303.

to examine the curious remains at the top. From the village, a deep and romantic glen runs upwards of a mile amongst the mountains, at the extremity of which is a cataract, which precipitates itself from a height of more than sixty feet down the rugged front of a rock. Thomson's description seemed to apply extremely well to it:

Smooth to the shelving brink a copious flood
Rolls fair and placid; where collected,
In one impetuous torrent, down the steep,
It thundering shoots, and shakes the country round.
At first an azure sheet it rushes broad;
Then whitening by degrees, as prone it falls,
And from the loud resounding rocks below
Dash'd in a cloud of foam, it sends aloft
A hoary mist, and forms a ceaseless shower.

On an artificial mount, not far from the village, though long since destroyed, stood once a castle, the palace of Llewelyn ap Gryffydd, Prince of Wales.*

* Powel's History of Wales, 325. Leland's Itinerary, V. 45.

At Llandygai (*the church of Tegai*) a village beautifully situated on the banks of the turbulent little river Ogwen, is a neat church, built in the form of a cross, having the tower in the centre. This is chiefly remarkable for containing the remains of Dr. Williams, Archbishop of York, who lived in the reign of Charles I. His memory is preserved by a mural monument, which represents him in his episcopal dress, kneeling at an altar.

On the right of the road, and not far from Bangor, I passed Penrhyn, the seat of the Irish Baron of that name. The present building, which is a good specimen of the military Gothic, much in vogue in the reign of Henry VI. is supposed to stand on the site of a palace which belonged to Roderic Moelwynog, Prince of Wales, who began his reign about the year 720.* When I

* Pennant's Tour, II. 284.

was here, it appeared to be undergoing some considerable alterations, under the inspection of the judicious Mr. Wyatt. A method of fencing grounds is used about the estates of Lord Penrhyn, which I never recollect to have observed before. The fences are made with pieces of blue slate, (of which his lordship has some extensive quarries in the neighbourhood) driven into the ground about a foot distant from each other, and interwoven near the top with briars, or any kind of flexible branches to hold them together. Whether these are of less expence than walls or hedges I know not, but in point of ornament I think they are sufficiently neat.

Bangor,* *the beautiful choir*, though now only a very small place, appears to have been formerly

* Mr. Warner, a late tourist, whose average rate of walking of about twenty-five miles a day seems to have rendered him liable to a thousand errors, has, amongst others, mistaken this place for Bangor in

formerly so large as from it's size to be called *Banger wawr*, the great Bangor, to distinguish it probably from Bangor-is-coed in Flintshire.* It is seated in a vale, from the back of which arise the vast mountains of Caernarvonshire. From the churchyard is an extensive and beautiful prospect of part of Anglesea, with the town and bay of Beaumaris.

The most antient historical fact that we have recorded of this place is, that Conda-
gius, a king of Britain, who reigned about 800 years before the time of Christ, erected

Flintshire. He speaks of its being watered by the "Deva's wizard stream," which flows under an elegant bridge, of five arches. He says that this was the site of the antient Roman station, *Bovvium*, that here was the monastery, 1200 of whose monks were slain by Ethelfred, and that this formed a part of the kingdom of Powis!!

● Gough's Camden, II. 549.

here

here a temple which he dedicated to the goddess Minerva.*

On a rocky eminence, about a quarter of a mile east from Bangor, stood formerly a castle built by Hugh, Earl of Chester, sometime during the reign of William II.† The date of its demolition is not known.

The cathedral is a small dirty-looking building, dedicated to St. Daniel. The nave is about an hundred and ten feet long, and sixty wide; the transepts sixty by twenty five; and the choir fifty-four by twenty-six.

It appears to have been first erected by Maelgwn Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, about the year 550; and Daniel, the son of Dinodus, Abbot of Bangor-is-coed, in Flintshire, who had, about thirty years before, founded a college or monastery

* Leland's Coll. de reb. Brit. II. 425.

† Speed's Chronicle, ch. XIV. p. 123.

here, was made the first bishop.* The prince, when he founded it, had some thoughts of entering himself a monk here, and taking up the profession of religion. But the charms and pleasures of the world, to which he was too much addicted, soon choaked the resolution, and by yielding to these, he became, in the latter part of his life, a great libertine, though in his public character he appears to have been always a brave man, and a noble and magnanimous prince.

The cathedral was destroyed by the Saxons 1071, and being afterwards rebuilt, it was again destroyed in 1212 by a detachment from the army of King John, who had invaded the Welsh on account of some depredations they had committed in the Marches. The bishop was taken prisoner, and carried to the English camp,

* Tanner's Notitia.

but

but obtained his ransom by the payment of two hundred hawks.*—It suffered along with the cathedral of St. Asaph about 1247, in the wars betwixt Henry III. and the Welsh.† In 1402 it was burnt down in the rebellion of Owen Glyndwr (who threatened to destroy all the cities in Wales) and remained in ruins upwards of ninety years, when the choir was rebuilt by the Bishop, Henry Denne,‡ but the tower and nave were, according to an inscription over the west door, built at the expence of Bishop Skeffington in 1532. This see met with a still more cruel ravager than Owen Glyndwr in the person of Bishop Bulkeley; who not only alienated many of the lands belonging to it, but went so far as even to sell the bells of the church.§

* Powell, 265. Wynne's History of Wales, 231.

† Matt. Paris, 642.

‡ Willis's Survey, 62. Camden's Brit. II. 549.

§ Fuller's Worthies of Wales, 19.

The revenues were valued in the 26th of Henry VIII. at £151. 3s. per annum in the whole, and £131. 16s. 4d. clear.*

This diocese comprehends the whole of Caernarvonshire, except four parishes, the Isle of Anglesea, and part of the Counties of Denbigh, Merioneth and Montgomery. It contains 107 parishes, of which 36 are impropriated. This see has been computed to be worth annually about £1200. To the cathedral belongs a Bishop, Dean, Archdeacon,† Treasurer, and two Prebendaries endowed; a precentor, chancellor, and three canons not endowed; two vicars,

* Tanner's Not. Mon.

† There were here formerly three archdeaconries, viz. of Bangor, Anglesea, and Merioneth: out of these the two first were united to the bishopric for it's better support, by act of Parliament, A. D. 1685. Willis's Survey, 135.

choral,

choral, an organist, lay clerks, choristers, and other officers.*

Mr. Pennant † supposes that Owen Gwynedd, Prince of Wales, who died in 1169, was buried in the south transept of the church, and that his remains lie beneath an arch with a flowery cross cut on a flat stone. Here are also mutilated tombs of the Bishops Vaughan and Rowlands, the former of whom died in 1597, and the latter in 1616.

Besides the cathedral, Tanner ‡ mentions, that there was near Bangor, a house of friars, preachers, founded about 1299, by Tudor ap Gronw, Lord of Penmynydd and Trecastle. Mr. Pennant § says, it stood a little way out of the town, and that it was converted into a free school by Jeffery Glynn, LL. D. sometime about

* Tanner's Not. Mon.

† Tour II. 281.

‡ Not. Mon.

§ Tour II. 282.

the reign of Edward VI. Over the chimney piece is a fragment of an antient monument to one *Gryffydd*, with a long sword carved upon it; and on the staircase is another stone, with the words *ap Tudor*, probably part of the tomb of the founder Tudor ap Gronw ap Tudor.

Bangor ferry, called by the Welsh *Porth-aethwy*, *the ferry of the confined waters*, is situated about a mile from the town, on the eastern bank of the Menai, the straight that divides Anglesea from the other parts of Wales, and is certainly one of the most charmingly retired places in the kingdom. Here is an Inn to which most travellers resort, there not being one in the town of Bangor at all comfortable. The charges are very high, being much the same as at most of the inns upon the great roads near London; but the accommodations for this distant part of the country are so extremely good,

good, that a reasonable person can scarcely think of finding fault.

It was at this Inn that I was, for the first time since my arrival in Wales, entertained with the music of the harp, the indigenous instrument of this country. The evening was mild, and the sun in retiring had cast a golden tinge over the whole face of nature. I had seated myself in a window which commanded a full and most delightful prospect of Anglesea, the Isle of the Druids, and I listened, wrapped in a pleasing melancholy, to the sweetly flowing tones. A thousand pleasant ideas of times of old floated on my imagination, and the emphatic lines of Gray crossed my thoughts with all their force.

Ruin seize thee, ruthless king!

Confusion on thy banners wait;

Tho' fann'd by conquest's crimson wing,

They mock the air with idle state.

Helm

Helm nor hauberk's twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, tyrant! shall avail
To save thy soul from nightly fears;
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!

In the warmth of my imagination I had overlooked the perhaps necessary, though most cruel, policy of Edward I. in destroying a race of men, whose songs, deemed almost inspired, could not be heard without the most dangerous corresponding effects on the minds of the multitude.

Their skill'd fingers knew how best to lead
Through all the maze of sound the wayward step
Of harmony, recalling oft and oft,
Permitting her unbridled course to rush
Through dissonance to concord, sweetest then
E'en when expected harshest.

The next morning I set out from Bangor ferry to go to Caernarvon. I had heard much in praise of the walk betwixt
Bangor

Bangor and Caernarvon, but I found very little to amuse me till I had passed the fourth mile-stone, when, on a sudden turn of the road, the straights of Menai, the well wooded Isle of Anglesea, and beyond these, the far distant Rivel mountains on one side, opened into a placid scene, whilst the black precipices and shagged sides of the rocks of Caernarvonshire on the other formed a most delightful contrast. This prospect was so momentary, that it seemed almost the effect of enchantment; and proceeding onward, the town and castle of Caernarvon, after some time, opened the scene, and completed one of the most exquisite landscapes the eye ever beheld.

At Caernarvon I went to the hotel, an Inn built a few years ago by the Earl of Uxbridge, upon a very large and extensive scale. It is an elegant stone building, standing on the outside of the town walls, a little above the Menai, of which it commands

mands a fine prospect. This Inn, which, in excellence of accommodations and goodness of apartments, is certainly the first in North Wales, will be found inferior to very few, even in England. The charges here, as well as at Bangor ferry, are rather high; but when the expences of a necessary establishment, only used for about four or five months in the year, are taken into consideration, there are very few who can, with justice, complain of their being too great.



CHAP. VII.

CAERNARVON.—WALLS—EXTENSIVE PROSPECT—HARBOUR—CASTLE—BIRTH OF EDWARD, FIRST PRINCE OF WALES—PRYNNE THE BARRISTER—PRIVILEGES—SEGONTIUM—ROMAN MODE OF BUILDING—BRITISH COURT—JUMPERS.

CAERNARVON is, taken in the whole, by much the most beautiful town in North Wales. It is situated on the eastern side of the Menai, the streight that divides Anglesea from the other parts of Wales, and is a place extremely well adapted to afford a few months retreat for a thinking mind from the busy scenes of the world. Here an admirer of nature may bury his

cares in contemplating the greatness of her works ; he will certainly find scope enough. Its situation, between the mountains and Anglesea, renders it a convenient place from whence travellers may with advantage be able to visit both.

Its name is properly *Caer-yn-Arfôn*, which signifies a fortified town in the district opposite to Mona or Anglesea.* The walls around the town are nearly entire, and as well as the castle, in their external appearance, the same as they were in the time of their founder Edward I. They are defended by a number of round towers, and have in them two principal gates, entrances to the town. Over one of these is a spacious room which is the Town hall, and in which the assemblies are frequently held. The buildings are upon the whole pretty regular, but the streets, as in all other an-

* *Ar fôn*, or *Armôn*, means opposite to Mona.

tient towns, are very narrow and confined. On the outside of the walls is a broad and pleasant terrace walk along the side of the Menai, extending from the quay to the north end of the town walls, which seemed to be the fashionable promenade in the fine evenings for all descriptions of people. The Court-house, in which the assizes are held, and all the county business is done, stands nearly opposite to the castle gates, and is within a neat little place. The Custom-house, a small insignificant building, is on the outside of the walls, and not far from the quay.

From the top of the rock, behind the hotel, I had an excellent bird's-eye view of the town. From hence the castle, and the whole of the town walls, may be seen to the greatest advantage; and on a fine day, the Isle of Anglesea, with Holyhead and Pary's Mountains, appear spread out like a map beneath the eye. Sometimes even the

far distant mountains of Wicklow may be seen towering beyond the channel. On the other side, towards the east, is a fine and varied prospect of the British Alps, where Snowdon, whose

— — — — — hoary head,
 Conspicuous many a league, the mariner,
 Bound homeward, and in hope already there,
 Greets with three cheers, exulting—

And the lofty Glydes are seen to far over-
 top the rest.

Caernarvon is in the Parish of Llanpublic, and the parish church, dedicated to St. Publicius son of the Emperor Maximus and Helena the daughter of Octavius Duke of Cornwall, is situated about half a mile from the town. Within it I was shewn a marble monument, on which were two recumbent figures of Sir William Gryffyd, of Penrhyn, who died in 1587, and Margaret his wife. The names and dates are at present nearly erased from some mischievous persons

persons having cut them out with knives. In this church the service is always performed in the Welsh language; the English service being performed in a chapel of ease situated in the north-west corner of the town walls, and formerly built for the use of the garrison.

At Caernarvon is a small but pretty good harbour, used chiefly by the vessels which trade there for slates, of which many thousands are exported every year to different parts of the kingdom. These slates are brought from the mountains of Llanberis, a village ten miles distant. The quarries are generally high up amongst the rocks, and the workmen, in conveying them down from thence, are obliged, as well as one horse before, to have another behind the carts, to prevent the whole, in some of the dangerous steeps in which these mountains abound, from being dashed headlong to the bottom, which must sometimes inevitably

be the case without this contrivance. This seems a most inconvenient mode of conveyance : it appears that sledges, similar to those used in many parts of Westmoreland and Cumberland for conveying slates down the mountains, would not only be less expensive, but much more safe and commodious.

The entrance into Caernarvon Castle is through a high grand gateway, over which is a figure of the royal founder grasping in his hand a dagger. In this gate, which has been otherwise remarkably strong, there have been no less than four portcullises. The castle is a large and irregular building, much more shattered within than from viewing it on the outside one would be led to imagine. The towers are for the most part octagonal, but there are three or four which have each ten sides; amongst these is the Eagle Tower, the largest and by far the most elegant in the whole building. This tower, which received its name from
the

the figure of an eagle yet left at the top of it, stands at one end of the oblong court of the castle, and has three handsome turrets issuing from it's top.

In this tower it was that Edward, the first Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward II, was born, on St. Mark's day, the 25th of April, 1284. Mr. Pennant * says, that the prince was brought forth "in a little dark room not twelve feet long, nor eight in breadth." This assertion is certainly founded upon tradition, but I wonder very much at that gentleman's retaining the opinion, after he had once examined the place. This room has indeed had a window and a fire place in it, but has never been any thing more than a passage-room to the other apartments, which, during the queen's illness, though nearly the most magnificent in the castle, must have been shut up, as

* Tour in Wales, II. 215.

useless. I have no doubt whatever, but that when Edward sent for his queen from England, he provided for her a more magnificent and suitable bed-room than this, which, besides being extremely inconvenient at a time like that, at the birth of an English prince, must, from its being so small and confined, have been beyond measure unhealthy. If the prince was born in the Eagle Tower, it must have been in one of the large rooms, occupying in width the whole inside, in an apartment suitable to the majesty of the heir apparent to the English crown, and not, as the guide, who shewed me the castle termed it, "in such a dog-hole as this." From the top of the building I was highly gratified by an extensive view of the Isle of Anglesea, the Menai, and the country many miles round.

At the other end of the court, and opposite to this tower, is a gate, called the
Queen's

Queen's Gate, said to be that through which the faithful Eleanor, Queen of Edward I. first entered the castle; it has been guarded by two portcullises, and had once a communication with the outside of the castle by a draw-bridge over a deep moat. It is at present considerably above the level of the ground on the outside, owing probably to the fosse having been filled up with earth from thence.

The state apartments are larger, and have been much more commodious than any of the others. The windows have been wide and elegant. On the outside the building is square; but I was surprised, upon going into them, to find all the rooms perfectly polygonal, the sides being formed out of the vast thickness of the walls. The floors and stairs throughout the castle are almost all beaten in and demolished.

There was formerly a gallery quite round the castle, by which, during a siege, a communication

munication could be had with the other parts without danger. On one side this yet remains undemolished. It was next the outer wall, and was lighted by narrow slits that served as stations, from which, during a siege, arrows, and other missile weapons could be discharged with advantage upon the enemy. The castle occupies the whole west end of the town; it has been a fortress of great strength, and before the introduction of artillery was, no doubt, able to withstand for a long time the most forcible attacks of an enemy. The exterior walls are in general about three yards in thickness. From its situation and strength it seems to have been well adapted to overawe the newly acquired subjects of its founder. It is bounded on one side by the Straights of Menai; by the Estuary of the Seiont, exactly where it receives the tide from the former, on another; on the third, and part of the fourth sides, by a creek of the

the Menai; and the remainder has the appearance of having the insulation completed by art.

From a heap of rubbish, near the end of the court opposite to the Eagle Tower, there is an echo which repeats several syllables most distinctly. There is also a single reverberation, and it appeared to proceed from some part of that tower.

This castle, from whatever point, or at whatever distance it is viewed, has a romantic singularity, and an air of dignity that commands an awe, and at the same time pleases the beholder. Its ivy-clad walls appear in some parts to be going fast to decay, while in others they even yet retain their antient form.

When one considers that it has withstood the shocks of more than five hundred winters, one almost wonders that it has stood so long; for what is there that does not fade?

The

The tower that long hath stood
 The crush of thunder and the warring winds,
 Shook by the flow, but sure destroyer—Time,
 Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base ;
 And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass
 Descend ; the Babylonian spires are sunk,
 Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down,

This huge rotundity we tread grows old ;
 And all those worlds that roll about the Sun,
 The Sun himself shall die ; and antient Night
 Again involve the desolate abyss.

It appears probable, that the town of Caernarvon sprung from the antient Segontium, a Roman city, about half a mile distant, and is not, as generally supposed, indebted to Edward I. for its name, for *Caer-yn-Arfon* might, with equal propriety, have been applied to the old city, as to this more modern fortress. The town, however, was no doubt the creation of Edward, and it was most probably formed, in a great measure, from the ruins of the old fort.

After

After this monarch had subdued the Welsh, he began to secure his conquests by erecting several strong holds, in different parts of Wales ; and it appearing that Caernarvonshire, on account of its mountains and morasses, was a county very likely to encourage insurrections, he determined to guard as much as possible against such, by erecting there the castles of Conwy and Caernarvon, two of the strongest in the whole principality.*

He began this castle in the beginning of 1283, and completed it within that year ; for on the 25th of April, in the year following, his son Edward, the first Prince of Wales, frequently afterwards stiled from the event, Edward of Caernarvon, was born here.† Mr. Pennant, from the authority of manu-

* Carte's History of England, II. 196.

† Matt. West. 372. Speed says, the prince was born on St. Mark's day, 1285. See his Chronicle, II. 545.

scripts in the possession of Sir John Sebright and Sir Roger Mostyn, of Gloddaeth, says, that it was built within the space of one year, by the labour of the peasants and at the cost of the chieftains of the country, on whom the conqueror had imposed that hateful task.* The revenues of the Archbishopric of York, which was then vacant, were applied towards defraying the expences.†

The reason why the Queen was brought here to bring forth the prince was, that since the Welsh remembered but too keenly the oppressions of the English officers who, in former reigns, had been placed over them, they flatly told the king that they were determined never to yield obedience but to a prince of their own nation; and Edward, perceiving them resolute, thought

* Pennant's Tour, II. 215.

† Grose's Antiquities, VII. p. 8.

it a necessary policy to have her removed, though in the depth of a severe winter, from the English court, to this place, and thus, if possible, delude them into that obedience which he supposed it might be difficult to retain by mere force. By this means he, in a short time, by assenting to their demands for a prince of their own, reduced the whole country to his will.

This place appears either to have suffered very little from the calamities of war, or very few events have been given to posterity. In the year 1294, in an insurrection of the Welsh, headed by Madoc, one of the chieftains of the country, it was suddenly attacked during the fair, and after the surrender, the town was burned and all the English found in the place cruelly murdered.*

* Henry de Knyghton, 2502. Tho. Walsingham, 26. Holinshed's Chronicle, II. 273. Stow's Annals, 206.

When

7

When and by whom this damage was repaired, or how soon afterwards the castle was retaken by the English, is not mentioned in any of the accounts that I have seen.

The first person whom I find appointed by Edward to be the governor, was John de Havering, with a salary of two hundred marks, for which he was obliged to maintain constantly, besides his own family, eighty men, fifteen of whom were to be cross-bowmen, one chaplain, one surgeon, and one smith; the rest were to do the duty of keepers of the gates, centinels, and other necessary offices.

In 1289, Adam de Wetenhall was appointed to the same important office. The establishment for the town and castle was as follows. The constable of the castle had sometimes sixty, and at other times only forty pounds per annum. The captain of the town £12. 3s. 4d. for his annual fee; but this office was sometimes annexed to the

the former, and then the salary was sixty pounds for both. The constable and captain had twenty-four soldiers allowed them for the defence of the place at the wages of fourpence a day each. Certainly this slight garrison could only be established for peaceful times!

In the year 1644 Caernarvon Castle was seized by Captain Swanly for the parliament, who at the same time took four hundred prisoners and a great quantity of arms, ammunition, and pillage.† It must however have been very soon afterwards retaken, for in May, 1645, I find it amongst the castles which were fortified for the king.‡ Lord Byron was then the governor, but on the castle being besieged by

* Pennant's Tour, II. 216.

† Whitelock's Memorials, 87.

‡ Rushworth's Historical Collections, Part IV. Vol. I. p. 21.

General Mytton and General Langhorn, about a year afterwards, he surrendered it to them upon honourable terms.*

In 1648 General Mytton and Colonel Mason were besieged here by Sir John Owen, with a small force of a hundred and fifty horse and a hundred and twenty foot; but Sir John having received notice that a detachment from the parliament's army, under the command of Colonel Carter and Lieutenant Colonel Twisleton, were upon their march to join Mytton, drew off his troops to attack them, and meeting them on the sands, near Llandegai, betwixt Bangor and Conwy, after a sharp engagement, his party was routed, about thirty of his men killed and himself, and about a hundred others were taken prisoners.†

* Whitelock, 208.

† Rushworth, part IV. vol. II. p. 1146. Whitelock, 311.

From

From this time all North Wales became subject to the Parliament.

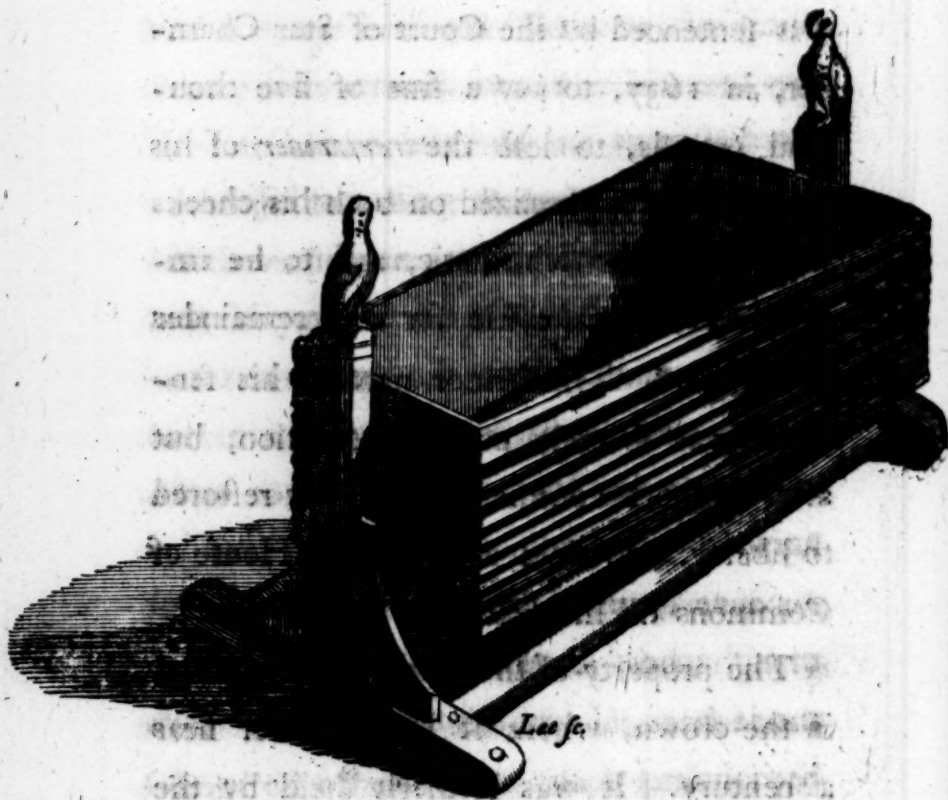
William Prynne, the barrister, for publishing his book, called *Histrion Mastix*, was sentenced by the Court of Star Chamber, in 1637, to pay a fine of five thousand pounds, to lose the *remainder* of his ears, to be stigmatized on both his cheeks with an S for schismatic, and to be imprisoned in this castle for the remainder of his life.* The former part of his sentence was severely put in execution, but after a short confinement he was restored to liberty, and held a seat in the House of Commons till his death.

The property of the castle is, at present, in the crown, where it has been for near a century. It was formerly held by the families of the Wynnes of Glynllivon, the Wynnes of Gwydir, the Bulkeleyes of

* Whitelock, 26.

Baron Hill in Anglesea, and the Mostyns of Gloddaeth.*

The cradle of the unfortunate Edward II. is still preserved, and either is now, or



was very lately, in the possession of the Reverend Mr. Ball of Newland, in Glou-

* Grose's Antiquities, VII. 9.

cestershire.

cestershire. It descended to him from one of his ancestors who attended that prince in his infancy, and to whom it became an honorary perquisite. This singular piece of antiquity, which I have delineated on the opposite page, from an engraving in the London Magazine for March 1774, is made of heart of oak, whose simplicity of construction, and rudeness of workmanship, are visible demonstrations of the small progress that elegance had at that time made in ornamental decorations. On the top of the upright posts are two figures of birds, supposed, by some, to have been intended for doves, the emblems of innocence, but though these somewhat resemble owls in their shape, I conjecture them to have been intended for eagles, as the tower was called the Eagle tower, and had a figure of that bird at the top of it. The cradle itself is pendent on two hooks driven into the uprights, linked by two rings to two

staples fastened to the cradle, and by them it swings. The sides and ends of the cradle are ornamented with a great variety of mouldings, whose junctions at the corners are cut off square without any degree of neatness, and the sides and ends are fastened together by rough nails. On each side are three holes for the rockers. Its dimensions are three feet two inches in length; twenty inches wide at the head, and seventeen at the foot; one foot five inches deep, and from the bottom of the pillar to the top of the birds, it is two feet ten inches.*

The town and castle had several privileges and immunities granted to them by their founder. The most material of these were, that Caernarvon should be a free Borough, that the constable of the castle

* See London Magazine for March 1774, p. 135, 136.

should

should be the mayor for the time being, and that the burgesses might elect two bailiffs.

They had likewise their own prison for all petty transgressions; which prison was not to be subject to the sheriff. They had also a merchant's guild, with this peculiar privilege, that if the bondsman of any person belonging to it dwelt within this town, having lands, and paying scot and lot for a year and a day, after that time he should not be claimed by his lord, but should remain free in the said town. The inhabitants were besides exempt throughout the kingdom, from toll, lastage, passage, murage, pontage, stallage, danegelt, and from all other customs and impositions whatsoever. And by the same charter Jews were not permitted to reside within the Borough.* They had also

* Grose's Antiquities, VII. p. 9.

another privilege, which was, that none of the burgesses could be convicted of any crime committed between the rivers Conwy and Dyfy, unless by a jury of their own townsmen.* The princes of Wales had here their chancery, exchequer, and justiciary of North Wales.†

The town is at present governed by a mayor, one alderman, two bailiffs, a town-clerk, and two sergeants at mace. The representative for the place is elected by its burgesses, and those of Conwy, Pwllheli, Nefyn, and Criccaeth. The right of voting is in every one resident or non-resident, who has been admitted to his freedom.‡

* Pennant's Tour, II. 218.

† Gibbon's Camden, 665. Wynne's Memoirs of the Gwydir family, 417.

‡ Pennant II. 219, who quotes Willis's Notitia Parliam. III. part I. 76.

About half a mile south of Caernarvon are a few walls, the small remains of Segontium,* the ancient Roman city, mentioned in the Itinerary of Antoninus, which appears to have been the principal station the Romans had in this country. Dinas Dinorddwig,† and all the others being only subordinate stations. The Roman road from Dinas Dinlle to Segontium, and from thence to Dinas Dinorddwig, is, in some places, still visible.

* Called also by the Welsh *Caer Cusfeint*, the fort of Constantine, and *Caer Segont*, the fort on the river Seiont.

† The following is a copy of an inscription, supposed to be Roman, dug up not long ago near this place,

H L
IMP
Q T R O
D E C I O
I S A . .
E R

Segontium

Segontium received it's name from the river Seion,* which runs from the lower lake at Llanberis, passes under the walls, and discharges itself into the Menai, near the castle of Caernarvon. It has been of an oblong form, and formerly occupied about six acres of ground. It is now divided into two parts by the road which leads to Beddgelert.

Not far from hence is the ancient fort which belonged to it; this is also of an oblong figure, and contains about an acre of ground. The walls are at present about eleven feet high and six in thickness, and at each corner there has formerly been a tower. The Romans formed their walls in a manner much different from what we do now; they first placed the stones in order one upon another, generally in two courses, the one regular and the other in

* Gough's Camd. II. 548.

a zigzag fashion, and then poured boiling mortar upon them, which, from it's fluidity, insinuated itself into the many openings and hollows of the work, and thereby, from it's strength, bound the irregular pieces of stone frequently used, into a firm and solid wall. In making the mortar they mingled sand with the lime, unrefined by the skreen, and charged with all it's gravel and pebbles, and even some of the mortar, on breaking it, has been found tempered with pounded brick. The mortar used in these walls has acquired from time almost the hardness of stone.

Along the walls are three parallel rows of circular holes, each nearly three inches in diameter, which pass through the whole thickness; and at the end are others similar. There has been much learned conjecture as to the design of these holes, some have supposed them to have been used for discharging arrows through at the enemy,

enemy, but from their length and narrowness it is impossible that this should ever have been the case. Others have thought that they might have been left in the walls to admit air, in order to harden the liquid cement that was poured in; but this cannot have been so, since there are such at Salisbury that appear to have been closed with stone at the ends, and others have been found even below the natural surface of the ground at Manchester. Mr. Whitaker,* in his history of Manchester, says, that he by chance met with one that was accidentally laid open from end to end, which he thought disclosed the design of all the rest, and which he supposes to have been this: that as the Romans carried their ramparts upwards, they took off from the pressure of the parts below, and gave a greater strength to the whole by turning

* Second edition, vol. I. p. 47.

little arches in their work, and fixing the rest of the wall upon them. At Segontium this appears to me to have been by no means the case, for the holes are too small, and at by far too great a distance from each other to have been of any material use in taking off from the weight; and for my own part, if I may be allowed a conjecture, merely from their external appearance, I should be inclined to suppose, notwithstanding the circumstance of their being said to be found below the natural surface of the ground at Manchester, that they were made for no other purpose than merely to place in them poles for resting the scaffolding upon, used in constructing the walls, and they may probably have been left unfilled up in order to admit the air into the interior of the work, or for some other purpose, with which I am not acquainted. I am more inclined to this conjecture, since they are
all

all parallel, and the rows at a proper distance above each other to admit the men to work. Mr. Pennant says, the holes at the end seem to run *through* the wall lengthways; these, I should think, may go six or eight feet in the wall, but there is no reason whatever to suppose they ever went *through*.

Camden* says, that this was the *Setantiorum Portus* of Ptolemy, but Mr. Whitaker,† with much greater propriety, fixes that at the Neb of the Nese, a high promontory of land in the river Ribble, about eight miles west of Preston, in Lancashire.

Matthew of Westminster‡ informs us, that the body of Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great, was discovered here in the year 1283, and honourably

* II. 798.

† History of Manchester, I. 180, 182.

‡ P. 371. See also Leland's Collectanea de rebus Britannicus, vol. II. p. 46, 346, and 404.

interred

interred in the neighbouring church, meaning, I should suppose, that of Llanbublic. How the body of Constantius came to be interred here I know not, for even the same author, in the former part of his work, relates that he died at York.* Helena, daughter of Octavius, Duke of Cornwall, and mother of Publicius, who was born at Segontium, and to whom the church is dedicated, is said to have built there a chapel, which the learned Rowlands tells us was in being in his days.†

Cadwallo, the Prince of Wales from 365 to 376, on account of the Isle of Anglesea being infested with the Irish and Pictish Rovers, removed the British Court from Aberffraw, where it had been placed

* Constantius, vir summæ magnitudinis Eborac in Britannia diem clausit extremum. Matt. Westm. 130. And see Holinshed's Chronicle, I. 63.

† Mona antiqua restaurata, 165.

about two hundred years before by Caswallon, law hîr to Segontium, or, as the Welsh called it, Caer Segont, where it remained about a century, till affairs becoming more settled in Anglesea, it was restored to the island by Roderic Mawr, *Roderic the Great*, where it afterwards continued during all the time of the British princes.*

Whilst I was at Caernarvon, I was induced from curiosity, to attend some of the meetings of a curious kind or branch of Calvinistical methodists, who from certain enthusiastic extravagancies, which they exhibit, are denominated *Jumpers*. I will describe them from an account of one of their own countrymen, as my own observations did not lead me to be so minute as he has been. "They persuade themselves that they are involuntarily acted upon by some divine impulse; and becoming in-

* Rowland's *Mona antiqua*, 149. 172.

toxicated

“ toxicated with this imagined inspiration,
“ they utter their rapture and their triumph
“ with such wildness and incoherence—
“ with such gesticulation and vociferation,
“ as set all reason and decorum at defiance.
“ This presumption seized chiefly the young
“ and sanguine, and, as it seems, like hyster-
“ ic affections, partly spreading through
“ the crowd by sympathy; its operations
“ and effects varying according to the dif-
“ ferent degrees of constitutional tempe-
“ rament, mock all description. Among
“ their preachers, who are also very vari-
“ ous in character, (illiterate and conceited
“ —or well meaning and sensible—or, too
“ frequently I fear, crafty and hypocritical)
“ some are more distinguished by their suc-
“ cess in exciting these *stravaganzas*. One
“ of these, after beginning perhaps in a
“ lower voice, in more broken and detached
“ sentences, rises by degrees to a great-

“ er vehemence of tone and gesture, which
“ often swells into a bellowing, as grating
“ to the ear as the attendant distortions
“ are disgusting to the sight—of a rational
“ man. In the early part he is accompa-
“ nied only by sighs and occasional moans,
“ with here and there a note of approbation;
“ which after a while are succeeded by
“ whinings and exclamations; till, at
“ length one among the crowd, wrought
“ up to a pitch of ecstasy, which it is sup-
“ posed will permit no longer to be sup-
“ pressed, starts and commences the jump-
“ ing; using at intervals some expressions
“ of praise or of triumph. The word
“ most generally adopted is “ *gogoniant*,”*
“ (glory!) Between these exclamations,
“ while labouring with the subject, is emit-
“ ted from the throat a harsh undulating

* These preachings are altogether in the Welsh language.

“ sound,

“ found, which by the profane has been
“ compared to a stone-cutter’s saw. The
“ conclusion, which I am almost ashamed
“ to describe, has more the appearance of
“ heathen orgies, than of the rational fer-
“ vour of christian devotion. The phren-
“ sy spreads among the multitude; for in
“ fact a kind of religious phrensy appears
“ to seize them. To any observations made
“ to them they seem insensible. Men and
“ women indiscriminately, cry and laugh,
“ jump and sing, with the wildest extrava-
“ gance. That their dress becomes deranged,
“ or the hair dishevel’d, is no longer an object
“ of attention. And their raptures continue,
“ till, spent with fatigue of mind and body,
“ the women are frequently carried out in
“ a state of apparent insensibility. In these
“ scenes indeed the youthful part of the
“ congregation are principally concerned;
“ the more elderly generally contenting
N 2 “ themselves

“ themselves with admiring, with devout
“ gratitude, what they deem the opera-
“ tions of the spirit.” Their exertions are
so great at these times, that the hardest labour they could be put to, would not so much waste their animal spirits, or weary their limbs, as two hours spent in this religious fury. Were their meetings seven times a week, instead of once or twice, I am confident that the strongest constitution could bear it but a very short time.

Besides these they have their general meetings, which are held once or twice in a year, at Caernarvon, Pwllheli, and other places in rotation. At these they sometimes assemble so many as five or six thousand people. They hold their general meeting at Caernarvon in the open air upon the green, near the castle; and not contented with their enthusiastic extravagancies upon the spot, many of the people, from
the

the country, have been known to continue them for three or four miles of their road home.*

* The following is an extract from a Letter inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine for September, 1799. p. 741. It is dated from Denbigh, and has the signature W. M. B. — "What renders this sect particularly dangerous is, that the preachers are in general instruments of Jacobinism, sent into this country to disseminate their doctrines; and I assure you, that *Paine's Works*, and other books of the like tendency have been translated into Welsh, and secretly distributed about by the leaders of this sect. These are facts which may be depended on, and which are well known to many in this country as well as to myself." Such is the zeal which the enemies of our country exhibit in disseminating their poisonous principles into the minds of the illiterate and vulgar, who unable to see through their shallow artifices, are frequently I fear too easily led into their wicked designs.

CHAP. VIII.

EXCURSION FROM CAERNARVON TO LLANBERIS.
 —VALE OF LLANBERIS—PICTURESQUE SCENERY—ROAD—LAKES—DOLBADARN CASTLE—WATERFALL—COPPER MINE—VILLAGE—INHABITANTS—PUBLIC HOUSES—CHURCH—WELL—CURATE—CAMDEN'S DESCRIPTION OF CAERNARVONSHIRE—MARGARET UCH EVAN—GLYDER VAWR—LLYN Y CWN—EXTENSIVE VIEW—GLYDER BACH—CWM IDWEL—TULL DŪ—LLYN IDWEL—PLANTS—ROMANTIC PASS NEAR LLANBERIS.

THE road from Caernarvon to Llanberis, *the church of St. Peris*, a village, about ten miles east of it, was, for the most part, rugged and unpleasant, lying for nearly half the way over a flat and barren country; and beyond that, as far as the first or lower lake, over mountains which, affording no varied prospects, were still dull and uninteresting.

But

But when I had passed these, and was arrived in the vale of Llanberis,* the scene which presented itself was so truly grand that I do not recollect one equal to it, even in the most romantic parts of Westmoreland or Cumberland. It reminded me most strongly of the scenery about Ulswater; but this, though much less extensive, is still more picturesque. The bold and prominent rocks which ascend almost immediately from the edges of the lakes, and tower into the sky, cast a pleasing gloom upon the whole landscape. The more distant mountains of the vale embosoming the moss-grown village, with the meadowy flat around it, are seen retiring in lines crossing each other behind in the most picturesque manner possible, whilst the intermediate space,

* This vale is also called Nant Beris, *the hollow of Peris*.

betwixt the village and the observer, is filled up with a small lake, whose waters reflecting the mountains which bound it, contract their sombre hue, and render the scene still more interesting. I could almost have fancied that nature untamed bore here an uninterrupted sway amidst the gloom and grandeur of these dreary rocks, had not the silence been, at intervals, interrupted by the loud blasts from the neighbouring copper mine, which rolled like distant thunder along the atmosphere.

In my walk to this place, I met several women and boys upon the road, who were coming from the mountains with horses, some laden with peat, almost the only kind of fuel used by the middle and lower class of people in Caernarvonshire, and others with heath, or as it is here called, *Grûg*, which the bakers make use of in heating their ovens. These they take from a distance of frequently more than six miles, to
sell

fell at Caernarvon, where they in general receive about sixpence for each horse load. In these journies, I have almost always observed that the women employ themselves in knitting, which makes some small addition to their miserable and hard-earned pittance.

There is no carriage road from Caernarvon nearer to Llanberis than the bottom of the lower lake, which is not quite half way; the road from thence being nothing more than a horse path, and one of the worst I ever saw. The best mode for those who are not able to walk so far, is to go on horseback or in carriages, as far as the lake, from whence they may be conveyed, in boats, to the waterfall, the old castle, or the village. I found every part about this romantic spot so extremely interesting that I most strenuously advise all persons who visit Caernarvon, to prolong their rout by coming here. There are no difficulties
encoun-

encountered but what the scenery will amply make up for. A person may ride all the way on horseback, but for the last three or four miles the road is so very bad that it would be just as easy to walk.

There are in the vale of Llanberis, which is straight and nearly of an equal breadth throughout, two small lakes or rather pools; for their size will scarcely admit of the former appellation. The upper pool is about a mile in length, and something less than half a mile over, and the other, though rather longer, is so very narrow that it has much more the appearance of a wide river than a lake. These are separated by a small neck of land, but have a communication by a stream which runs betwixt them.

In these pools the fish called char used formerly to be taken, but owing to the copper-works carried on here, these have all been long since destroyed.

On

On a rocky eminence betwixt the two, stands an old building called Dolbadarn Castle; it consists now of a round tower, twenty-six feet in diameter within, and some few shattered remains of the walls and offices, which have once occupied the summit of the steep. It is called Castell Dolbadarn, or, *the castle of Padarn's meadow*, on account of it's having been erected on the verge of a piece of ground, called Padarn's meadow, supposed to have been the place to which an holy recluse of that name retired from the world, to enjoy here meditation and solitude.

Just thus in woods and solitary caves
The antient hermits liv'd, but they liv'd happy;
And in their quiet contemplations found
More real comforts, than societies
Of men could yield, than cities could afford,
Or all the lustres that a court could give.

There are several churches in Wales dedicated to this British saint.

This

This castle, from it's construction is evidently of British origin, and Mr. Rowlands* seems to have been of opinion, that it was in existence so early as the sixth century, for it is one of the forts which he mentions as being about that time in the possession of Maelgwn Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, and his son Rhun ap Maelgwn, during their contentions with the Saxons.

It was built, no doubt, to defend the narrow pass through the vale into the interior of the mountains, and from it's situation, seems to have been capable of affording perfect security to two or three hundred persons in case of an emergency. In this castle Owen Goch was confined for more than twenty years, for having joined in a rebellion against his brother Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, the last Prince of Wales. It seems to have been long in ruins, for in

* *Mona antiqua restaurata*, 149.

Leland's time, he says, there was only "a piece of a tower" left.*

Mr. Warrington † supposes that this was antiently called Bere Castle, ‡ which some of the historians relate to have been in Caernarvonshire, and seated in the midst of a morass, inaccessible but by a single causeway, and not to be approached but through the narrow and rugged defiles between the mountains. This, at that time, the strongest castle the Welsh possessed, was taken in 1283, by the Earl of Pembroke, after a slight resistance.

A little to the south of the castle is a tremendous cataract, called Caunant mawr,

* "Dolbadarn is on a rock betwixt two linnys.
 "There is yet a *pece of a toure*, where Owèn Gough,
 "brother to Lluelin, last Prince, was yn prison."
 Leland's Itin. V. 44.

† History of Wales, 517. See also Carte's History of England, II. 194, who quotes Chron. T. Wikes and Annal. Trivet.

‡ A corruption probably of *Peris* or *Beris Castle*.

the

the waterfall of the great chasm, the height of which is upwards of sixty feet. It is formed by a mountain stream, which rushes through a narrow opening in the rock, and is precipitated with a thundering noise into the deep black pool below.

At some distance beyond the castle, and near the edge of the upper pool, is a copper mine belonging to a company of proprietors, who reside at Macclesfield. These works are very inconsiderable, not having more than forty or fifty hands employed in them.

The village of Llanberis is romantic in the extreme; it is situated in a narrow grassy dell, surrounded by immense rocks, whose summits, cloud-capped, are but seldom visible to the inhabitants from below. Except two tolerable houses in the vale, one belonging to Mr. Jones, the agent to the copper mine, and the other, which is on the side of the lake, opposite to Dolbadarn castle,

castle, belonging to the agent to the slate quarries; the whole village consists but of two cottages, apparently the most miserable. They are in general constructed of a shaly kind of stone, with which the country abounds, and with but just so much lime as to keep out the keenest of the mountain blasts. The windows are all very small, and in addition to this, by far the greater part of them, with having been formerly broken, are blocked up with boards, leaving only three or four panes of glass, and affording scarcely sufficient light within to render even "darkness visible." Here, I might have expected to find a race of men, who, subject to the inconveniences, without participating in the benefits of civil society, were in a state little short of misery. These men, it might again be supposed, in this secluded place, with difficulty contriving to keep up an existence, would be cheerless as their own mountains,

throwded

shrowded in snow and clouds ; but I found them not so, they were happier in their moss-grown coverings, than millions in more exalted stations of life ; here I truly found that

Tho' poor the peasant's hut, his feasts tho' small,
He sees his little lot, the lot of all ;
Sees no contiguous palace rear it's head,
To shame the meanness of his humble shed ;
No costly lord the sumptuous banquet deal,
To make him loath his vegetable meal ;
But calm, and bred in ignorance and toil,
Each with contracting fits him to the soil.
Cheerful at morn he wakes from short repose,
Breathes the keen air, and carols as he goes.
At night, returning, every labour sped,
He sits him down the monarch of a shed.

There are two houses in this village, at which the wearied traveller may take such poor refreshments as the place affords. One of these belongs to John Close, a grey-

grey-headed old man, who, though born and brought up in the north of Yorkshire, having occasion to come into Wales when he was quite a youth, preferred this to his Yorkshire home, and has resided here ever since. The other house is kept by the parish clerk, who may be employed as a guide over any part of the adjacent country. I found him well acquainted with the mountains, and a much more intelligent man than guides in general are. He does not speak English well, but his civility and attention were a sufficient compensation for that defect. Neither of these places afford a bed, nor any thing better than bread, butter, and cheese, and perhaps, eggs and bacon.

As I was one day sitting to my rustic fare, in the former of these houses, I could not help remarking the oddness of the group, all at the same time, and in the same room, enjoying their different repasts.

At one table was seated the family of the house, consisting of the host, his wife, and their son and daughter, eating their bread and milk, the common food of the labouring people here; a large overgrown old sow making a noise, neither very low nor very musical, whilst she was devouring her dinner from a pail placed for her by the daughter, was in one corner, and I was eating my bread and butter, with an appetite steeled against niceties by the keenness of the mountain air, at a table, covered with a dirty napkin, in the other corner. This scene, however, induced me ever afterwards, in my excursions to this place, to bring with me refreshments from Caernarvon, and enjoy my dinner in quiet in the open air. But excepting in this single instance, I did not find the house worse than I had any reason to expect in such a place as this. The accommodations in the clerk's house are poor,
but

but the inhabitants seemed very clean and decent people.

The church of Llanberis, which is dedicated to St. Peris, a cardinal, missioned from Rome as a Legate to this island, who is said to have settled and died at this place, is, without exception, the most ill-looking place of worship I ever beheld. The first time I visited the village, I absolutely mistook it for an antient cottage, for even the bell turret was so overgrown with ivy as to bear as much the appearance of a weather-beaten chimney as any thing else, and the long grass in the church yard completely hid the few pave stones therein from the view. I thought it indeed a cottage larger than the rest, and it was some-time before I could reconcile to myself that it was a church. Here is yet to be seen the Well of the Saint, inclosed within a square wall, but I met with no sybil, who, as Mr. Pennant relates, could divine

my fortune by the appearance or non-appearance of a little fish which lurks in some of its holes.

The curate I saw, and was introduced to; he resides in a mean-looking cottage not far distant, which seemed to consist of but few other rooms than a kitchen and bed room, the latter of which served also for his study. When I first saw him he was employed in reading in an old volume of sermons. His dress was somewhat singular; he had on a blue coat, which had long been worn threadbare, a pair of antique corduroy breeches and a black waistcoat, and round his head he wore a blue handkerchief. His library might have been the same that Hurdis has described in the *Village Curate*.

Yon half-a-dozen shelves support, vast weight,

The curate's library. There marshall'd stand,

Sages and heroes, modern and antique:

He, their commander, like the vanquished fiend,

Out-

Out-cast of heav'n, oft thro' their armed files,
Darts an experienced eye, and feels his heart,
Distend with pride, to be their only chief:
Yet needs he not the tedious muster-roll,
The title-page of each well-known, his name,
And character.

From the exterior of the cottage, it seemed but the habitation of misery, but the smiles of the good man were such as would render even misery itself cheerful. His salary is about forty pounds, on which, with his little farm, he contrives to support himself, his wife, and a horse, and with this slender pittance he appeared perfectly contented and comfortable. His wife was not at home, but from a wheel which I observed in the kitchen, I conjectured that her time was employed in spinning wool. The account I had from some of the parishioners of his character was, that he was a man respected and beloved by all, and that his chief attention

was occupied in doing such good as his circumstances would afford to his fellow creatures.

I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose
life

Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause.
To such I render more than mere respect,
Whose actions say that they respect themselves.

The vale of Llanberis was formerly almost covered with wood, but of this, there is at present, but little left, except a few saplings from the old roots, which only serve to remind us of the greater want of the rest. Within the memory of persons now living, there were great woods of oak in different places about these mountains. Leland,* who wrote in the reign of Henry

* Itin. V. 42.

VIII. says, "The best wood of Cairnarvonshire is by Glinne Kledder (*Glyn Llwydare*) and by Glin Lhughy (*Glyn Llygwy*), and by Capel Kiryk (*Capel Curig*), and at Llanperis." In the time of Howel Dha, *Howel the good*, who was made Prince of Wales in the year 940, the whole country must have been nearly covered with wood, for it is ordered in the Welsh laws, founded by him, that "whoever cleared away timber from any land without the consent of the owner, he should, for five years, have a right to the land so cleared; and after that time it should return again to the owner."* These mountains also formerly abounded in deer,† which even continued

* Wotton's *Leges Wallicæ*.

† In hac (Merioneth) et Arvoniam cervorum et caprearum maxima in excelsis montibus cernitur multitudo. Hum. Lhwyd's *Comment.* 54. Leland

continued in great quantities till much later than the reign of Henry VIII. but after the use of fire arms became general, they were soon all destroyed.

Camden,* speaking of the romantic parts of Caernarvonshire, says “ Nature
 “ has reared groups of mountains, as if she
 “ meant here to bind the island fast to the
 “ bowels of the earth, and make a safe
 “ retreat for the Britons in time of war.
 “ For here are so many crags and rocks,
 “ so many woody vallies rendered impassible
 “ by so many lakes, that the lightest
 “ troops, much less an army, could never

in his Itinerary, vol. V. p. 43, says, “ Cairarvon-
 “ shire, aboute the shore, hath reasonable good
 “ corne, as about a mile upland from the shore
 “ outo Cairarvon. Then more upwarde be *Eryri*
 “ hills, and in them ys very litle corne, except
 “ oats in some places, and a litle barley, but
 “ scantly rye: if there were *the deer would destroy it.*”

* Gough's Camden, III. 548.

“ find

“ find their way among them. These
“ mountains may truly be called the Bri-
“ tish Alps; for besides that they are the
“ highest in the whole island, they are
“ like the Alps, bespread with broken
“ crags on every side, all surrounding
“ one, which towering far above the rest
“ in the centre, lifts it's head so loftily as
“ if it meant not only to threaten, but to
“ thrust it into the sky.”

Near the end of the lower lake at Llan-
beris, there formerly lived a celebrated
personage, called *Margaret uch Evan*,
who died a few years since at the great
age of about 105, she was the last spe-
cimen of the strength and spirit of the
antient British fair. “ This extraordi-
“ nary female was the greatest hunter,
“ shooter, and fisher of her time; she
“ kept a dozen at least of dogs, terriers,
“ greyhounds, and spaniels, all excellent
“ in their kinds. She killed more foxes
“ in

“ in one year than all the confederate
“ hunts do in ten; rowed stoutly, and
“ was queen of the lake; fiddled excel-
“ lently, and knew all the old British
“ music; did not neglect the mechanic
“ arts, for she was a good joiner: and at
“ the age of seventy, was the best wrestler
“ in the country, and few young men
“ dared to try a fall with her. Some
“ years ago she had a maid of congenial
“ qualities; but death, that mighty hun-
“ ter, at last earthed this faithful compa-
“ nion of hers. Margaret was also black-
“ smith, shoe-maker, boat-builder, and
“ maker of harps. She shoe her own
“ horses, made her own shoes, and built
“ her own boats, while she was under
“ contract to convey the copper ore down
“ the lakes. All the neighbouring bards
“ paid their addresses to Margaret, and
“ celebrated her exploits in pure British
“ verse. At length she gave her hand to
“ the

“ the most effeminate of her admirers, as
 “ if predetermined to maintain the supe-
 “ riority which nature has bestowed on
 “ her.”*

Accompanied by the parish clerk as a guide, I ascended the lofty and almost perpendicular mountain on the north-east side of the village, called Glyder vawr, *the great Glyder*. The ascent I found much more steep and tiresome than I afterwards found that to the summit of Snowdon. The path all the way was rocky, and in many places very wet and slippery: but little inconveniences of this kind the traveller, amongst the mountains, from their frequent occurrence, will soon learn to bear with. On the left of the ascent were pointed out to me, at some distance, two

* This account of Margaret uch Evan is extracted from Mr. Pennant's Tour, II, 166, 167.

high mountains, called Llyder Vawr and Llyder Vack, *the greater and lesser Llyder.*

Glyder Vawr is the loftiest of all the Caernarvonshire mountains, except Snowdon, and in a flat, almost surrounded by rocks, about three-fourths of the distance to the summit, we came to a small pool, called Llyn y Cwn^A, *the pool of the dogs.* This alpine lake is mentioned in the Itinerary of Giraldus Cambrensis,* as containing a singular kind of trout, perch, and Eels, which were all monocular, each wanting a left eye. This account has in general, been looked upon as fabulous; and Speed † thus deridingly speaks of it: “ These matters are out of my creed; “ yet I think the reader had better believe them, than go to see whether it “ be so or not.” But the Honourable

* Gir. Camb. Itin. Cambriæ, Lib. II. cap. 9. p. 872.

† Theatre of Great Brit.

Daines Barrington, in a paper on Cambrian fish, inserted in the Philosophical Transactions for 1767, asserts, that on accurate enquiry he had heard of a monocular trout being taken within the memory of persons then living. At present I believe the pool is entirely destitute of fish of every description.

From the summit of Glyder is a grand and unbounded prospect; on one side, the immense mountains of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, appeared with their prominent and towering precipices in such rude order, that they seemed "the fragments of a shattered world;" these were intersected by the green meadowy vales and deep glens which were seen to wind amongst them. On the other side, towards the town of Caernarvon, I had the entire Isle of Anglesea surrounded by the sea, and at a great distance, the Isle of Man resembling a faintly formed cloud. Whilst
the

the intervening space betwixt myself and the sea, was filled up by the varied scenery of mountain and vale, plentifully interspersed with lakes and streams.

At a little distance, north-east of this mountain, but with a deep hollow intervening, is Glyder Bach, *the lesser Glyder*, of which Mr. Pennant * has given the following singular account, " The area
" of the summit was covered with groups
" of columnar stones of vast size, from
" ten to thirty feet long, lying in all di-
" rections; most of them were of co-
" lumnar form, often piled on one an-
" other; in other places, half erect, flop-
" ing down, and supported by others,
" which lie, without any order, at their
" bases. The tops are frequently crowned
" in the strangest manner with other stones
" lying on them horizontally. One was

* Tour in Wales, II. 160.

" about

“ about twenty-five feet long and six
“ broad : I climbed up,” says this Gentleman, “ and on stamping it with my
“ foot, felt a strong tremulous motion from
“ end to end. Another, eleven feet long
“ and six in circumference in the thinnest
“ part, was poised so nicely on the point
“ of a rock, that to appearance the touch
“ of a child would upset it. A third
“ enormous mass had the property of a
“ rocking stone.

“ Many of the stones had bedded in
“ them shells; and in their neighbour-
“ hood I found several pieces of lava. I
“ would therefore consider this moun-
“ tain to have been a sort of wreck of
“ nature, formed and flung up by some
“ mighty internal convulsion, which has
“ given these vast groups of stones for-
“ tuitously such a strange disposition; for
“ had they been the settled strata bared
“ of their earth by a long series of rains,
“ they

“ they would have retained the same regular appearance that we observe in all other beds of similar matter.”

From my station on Glyder vawr, the guide also pointed out to me, at the distance of four or five miles towards the north, and beyond the deep hollows of Nant Francon and Cwm Idwal, the two lofty mountains, Carnedd David and Carnedd Llewelyn; the latter chiefly noted on account of some uncommon plants that grow near its summit.

Having sufficiently enjoyed the numerous entertaining objects which presented themselves to me from this elevated situation, I descended to Llyn y Cwn; and proceeding about three quarters of a mile along the flat in which it is situated, came at length to an immense precipice above a hundred yards in perpendicular height, which forms one side of the dreadful hollow that incloses the black waters of Llyn Idwal.

Idwal. This hollow, surrounded on all sides by black and prominent rocks, is called Cwm Idwal, on account of it's having been the place where Nefydd Hardd, for some reason, not known, caused his son Dunawt to murder Idwal, the son of Owen Gwynedd, a young prince, who had been entrusted to his care and protection.* It is a fit place to inspire murderous thoughts. The shepherds believe it to be the haunt of dæmons, and that no bird dare fly over it's damned water, fatal as that of Avernus. Knowing these facts, and standing on the brink of the gloomy vale, I could almost have persuaded myself that I had seen

The sheet spectre rising from the gloom,
Point at the murderer's stab, and shudder by.

* See an account of the Fifteen Tribes of North Wales in the Cambrian Register, I. p. 149.

I descended along the broken rocks on one side of this precipice, to a great depth into the hollow, and turning amongst the larger masses that lay in rude heaps, rather more than half way down, where the descent began to be more gradual, I arrived at the foot of a most tremendous chasm in the mountain, called Tull da, *the black cleft*. A more sublime scene the pencil, even of Salvator Rosa, could not have traced. Here the stream, that runs from Llyn y Cwn, is seen rolling from the top, and broken in it's descent by a hundred interrupting rocks. But in addition to this, there had been much rain the day before I was here, and the accumulated volume of water rushing in a vast cataract, from the astonishing height of *a hundred and fifty yards*,

In one impetuous torrent down the steep,
Now thundering shot, and shook the country round.

Amongst

Amongst the rocks, at the bottom, I observed a number of circular holes of different sizes, from a few inches in diameter to two feet or upwards, which have been formed by the eddy of the torrent from above. These hollows are frequently called by the Welsh people, Devil's pots, and from this circumstance, the place itself is sometimes called the Devil's kitchen.

From this place I now descended to Llyn Idwal, but found near this lake but little recompense for my trouble. The scenery around was gloomy and dismal, but afforded nothing of landscape beauty. Tull dû from hence appeared merely a cleft in the rock, without any thing remarkable about it, for it's great height diminishes it here almost to nothing. Had I first seen it from hence I by no means think I should have had the curiosity to

clamber up to it, for the ascent is very steep and rocky.

With some trouble I retraced the road I had come, and after a while arrived once more at the place from whence I had begun the descent, and thence I proceeded to the upper part of the horrid chasm which I had before viewed with such sublime pleasure from below. Near this place I had been taught to expect that I should meet with a great number of uncommon plants; and I was not disappointed, for I this day found within a very small space of ground, no fewer than the following: *Plantago maritima*—*Lobelia dortmanna*—*Parnassia palustris*—*Statice armeria*—*Rumex digynus*—*Vaccinium myrtillus*—*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*—*Saxifraga stellaris*—*Saxifraga nivalis*—*Saxifraga palmata*—*Saxifraga oppositifolia*—*Saxifraga hypnoides*—*Silene acaulis*—*Arenaria verna*—And two varieties which have been
taken

taken by English botanists for *Arenaria junperina* and *Arenaria laucifolia* of Linnæus, but these, according to Dr. Smith, have not hitherto been found in England. *Rubus saxatilis*—*Thalictrum alpinum*—*Thalictrum minus*—*Subularia Aquatica*—*Cochlearia officinalis*—*Cochlearia groenlandica* of Withering*—*Hieracium alpinum*—*Gnaphalium dioicum*—*Empetrum nigrum*—*Rhodiola rosea*—*Juniperus communis* (var. 2. Mountain dwarf Juniper tree)—*Lycopodium selaginoides*—*Lycopodium selago*—*Lycopodium alpinum*—*Isoetes lacustris*—*Pteris crispa*—*Asplenium viride*—*Polypodium phlegopteris*, and *Polypodium fragile*.—What a treat for a botanist!

* This I have been informed, by Dr. Smith, is not *C. Groenlandica* of Linnæus, but only a variety of *C. Officinalis*. Dr. Hull says, when it is cultivated in a rich soil, it becomes *C. Officinalis*, but if kept confined in a pot, retains it's diminutive size. *British Flora*, p. 482.

In a second visit that I made to Llanberis, I went through the curious and romantic pass, leading from thence by the village of Capel Curig to Llanrwt. This pass is betwixt three and four miles in length, and in some places not more than fifty or sixty yards wide. The rocks on each side are of a tremendous height, in some places nearly perpendicular, and in others overhanging their bases many yards. Sometimes the road winds quite under the precipices, and the impending rocks, destitute of vegetation, render the scene in the highest degree romantic. In few places has Nature been more grand in her works than in this vale, which towers infinitely above all the pigmy works of art. About two miles from Llanberis there is a huge fragment of rock, once probably loosened from the majestic heights above, under which is a considerable cavity where a poor woman for many years resided during the

the summer season, in order to tend and milk her sheep and cows. The summit of the ascent, which is very gradual, is called Gorphwysfa, or the resting place. A good road might, I think, be made without much expence from Caernarvon by Llanberis, and through this pass to Llanrwst. This would be shorter than the present road by Conwy and Bangor by at least ten miles, and would have all the additional attractions of the most romantic scenery.

The walk from Llanberis back again to Caernarvon, I found much more pleasing than the dull mountain prospects the other way. I had from all the eminences an extensive view of Anglesea towards Beaumaris and Priestholme, and to the left the fine old castle of Caernarvon appeared with all it's splendid towers rising above the hills.

CHAP. IX.

EXCURSION FROM CAERNARVON TO THE SUMMIT OF SNOWDON.—INSTRUCTIONS.—CLOGWYN DU'R ARDDU—HEIGHT—NAME—MR. PENNANT'S DESCRIPTION—NATURAL PRODUCTIONS—LAKES—PLANTS—WELL—INCREDIBLE STORY OF GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS—SUN NOT APPEARING TO RISE FROM THE SEA—ROYAL FOREST—BRITISH PARNASSUS—MORE INSTRUCTIONS—SCHEME FOR AN INN NEAR DOLBADARN.

THE distance of the summit of Snowdon from Caernarvon, is rather more than ten miles, and from Dolbadarn Castle, in the vale of Llanberis, the ascent is so gradual, that a person mounted on a little Welsh poney may, without any great difficulty, ride up very nearly to the top.

The traveller must go from Caernarvon to Dolbadarn Castle, and then turning to the right, go by the waterfall, Caunant Mawr,

Mawr, up the mountain to a vale called Cwm Brwynog, and proceeding along the ridge, south west of, and immediately over the vale of Llanberis, he will come within sight of a black, and almost perpendicular rock, with a small lake at its bottom, called Clogwyn Du'r Arddu. This he will leave about a quarter of a mile on his right, and then ascending the steep called Llechwedd y Rê, he must direct his course south west to the Well (a place sufficiently known by the guides) from whence he will find it about a mile to the highest peak of Snowdon, called Yr Wyddfa, *the conspicuous*.

Having conducted the traveller to the summit of this celebrated mountain, I will now proceed to follow him myself.

I went from the castle to Cwm Brwynog, but instead of taking the route I have here prescribed, I wandered to the foot of Clogwyn Du'r Arddu, to search for some plants, which are mentioned by Llwyd and Ray,

Ray, as growing on that rock. A clergyman of the neighbourhood, who was so obliging as to accompany me in this and several other rambles amongst these mountains, formed the wild idea of attempting to climb apparently up the face of the precipice, and I, eager in my pursuit, did not object to the adventure. We began our laborious task without once reflecting on the many dangers that might attend it. For a short time we got on without much difficulty, but we were soon obliged to have recourse to our hands and knees, and clamber thus from one crag to another. Every step now required the greatest care, for even the mere laying hold of a loose stone might have proved fatal. I had once taken hold of a piece of the rock, and was about to trust my whole weight upon it, when it loosened from its bed, and I should have been sent headlong to the bottom had I not instinctively snatched hold

of

of a tuft of grass, which grew close by it, and was so firm as to save me. When we had ascended a little more than half-way, I was much afraid we should have been doomed to return, on account of the masses of rock over which we had to climb, beginning to increase in size; we knew, however, that a descent would have been attended with infinite danger, and being urged on partly by eagerness in our pursuit, but more from a desire to be at the top, we determined to brave every difficulty. This we did, for in about an hour and a quarter from the time of our beginning the ascent, we found ourselves on the top of this dreadful precipice, and in possession of some very uncommon plants which we had picked up during our walk.

I can scarcely describe what my sensations were, when upon arriving here my companion pointed out to me the summit of Snowdon, at the distance of only about a
mile

mile and a half from us, and from it's great elevation appearing but little more than half a mile distant. I was so much cheered with the sight, that I proceeded from hence with a degree of spirit and alacrity that I certainly should not have enjoyed, had it not been from the remembrance of the dangers we had passed, and the knowledge that these were at an end. This circumstance reminded me, very forcibly, of the story of the Pedlar, who in order to have some relief from the constant and wearisome burthen of his pack, hit upon the odd expedient of tying a large stone upon it. This, when he became much fatigued, he threw off, and found then the lightness of his burthen, when compared to the double weight before, answered every purpose he wanted. It was exactly thus with me, for after all the fagging work, I had just had to get up Clogwyn du'r Arddu, I found ascending to the summit of Snowdon quite

quite light and easy ; but had I gone along the regular track, I have no doubt that I should have *fancied* myself much more wearied than I now really felt.

The perpendicular height of Snowdon, is, according to the late admeasurements, one thousand one hundred and ninety yards (not quite three quarters of a mile) from the level of the sea. It rises to a mere point, it's summit being not more than three or four yards in diameter. Round this, a circular wall has been built by some well-disposed person, probably some one of the shepherds, who send their flocks in these mountains, which is found of the greatest use to travellers, to sit upon and enjoy the grand prospects around.

This mountain was by the Saxons first called Snowdon, as this word is evidently derived from their language, and signifies *a snowy bill, or a bill covered with snow.* The Welsh call all this cluster of mountains,

by

by the general name of Creigiau yr Eryrii, the *snowy cliffs*, from the British words *Craig* a rock, and *Eira* snow. The highest point is Yr Wyddfa, *the conspicuous*. All the mountains that go under the above denomination, lie in the county of Caernarvon, for Leland,* who went over this country in the reign of Henry VIII. under the royal commission, says, “no part of Merionethshire lyeth in Crege Ery; so that though that shire be mountainous, yet is all Cregery in Caernarvonshire.”

Mr. Pennant's † description of this mountain is so extremely accurate and expressive, that instead of my own observations, I will give that in his words. “The mountain from the summit,” says this gentleman, “seems propped by four buttresses; between which, are four deep

* Itin. V. 40. † Tour in Wales II. 171. 172. 173.

" Cwm or hollows; each, excepting one,
 " had one or more lakes lodged in it's dis-
 " tant bottom. The nearest was Ffyn-
 " non Llâs, or *the Green well*, lying imme-
 " diately below us. One of the company
 " had the curiosity to descend a very bad
 " way to a jutting rock, that impended
 " over the monstrous precipice; and he
 " seemed like Mercury ready to take his
 " flight from the summit of Atlas. The
 " waters of Ffynon Llâs, from this height,
 " appeared black and unfathomable, and
 " the edges quite green. From thence is
 " a succession of bottoms, surrounded by
 " the most lofty and rugged hills, the
 " greatest part of whose sides are quite
 " mural, and form the most magnificent
 " amphitheatre in nature. The *Wyddfa*
 " is on one side; *Crib y Pibill*,* with it's
 " serrated

* This rock is called also Crib y Ddificil. The
 hollow betwixt this and Crib Coch is called Bwlch
 y Saethau,

“ ferrated tops, on another; *Crib Coch*, a
 “ ridge of fiery redness, appears beneath
 “ the preceding; and opposite to it, is the
 “ boundary called the *Llechwedd*. Ano-
 “ ther very singular support to this moun-
 “ tain is y *Clawdd Coch*, rising into a sharp
 “ ridge, so narrow as not to afford even
 “ breadth for a path.†”

“ The view from this exalted situation
 “ is unbounded. I saw from it, the county
 “ of Chester, the high hills of Yorkshire,
 “ part of the North of England, Scotland,
 “ and Ireland; a plain view of the Isle of
 “ Man, and that of Anglesea, lay extended
 “ like a map beneath us, with every rill

y *Saethau*, the *Gap of the arrows*, where tradition re-
 lates, that the hunters used formerly to conceal
 themselves, in order to shoot stags, or any other
 wild animals that passed by.

† There is a foot path along this narrow ridge,
 over which the guide from *Beddgelert* always con-
 ducts persons who ascend the mountain from that
 place.

visible.

" visible. I took much pains to see this
 " prospect to advantage; sat up at a farm
 " on the west, till about twelve, and
 " walked up the whole way. The night
 " was remarkably fine and starry; to-
 " wards morn the stars faded away,* and
 " left a short interval of darkness, which
 " soon dispersed by the dawn of day.
 " The body of the sun appearing most dis-
 " tinct, with the rotundity of the moon
 " before it, arose high enough to render
 " it's beams too brilliant for our sight.
 " The sea, which bounded the western
 " part, was gilt by it's beams, at first in
 " slender streaks, but at length it glowed
 " with redness. The prospect was disclosed
 " to us, like the gradual drawing up of
 " a curtain in a theatre. We saw more

* By this expression, I presume Mr. P. means,
 that they were hidden from the sight by intervening
 clouds.

“ and more till the heat became so power-
“ ful, as to attract the mists from the vari-
“ ous lakes, which in a slight degree, ob-
“ scured the prospect. The shadow of the
“ mountain was flung many miles, and
“ shewed it's bicapitated form; the Wyddfa
“ making one, Crib y Distill the other
“ head. I counted this time between
“ twenty and thirty lakes, either in this
“ county or Merionethshire. The day
“ proved so excessively hot, that the jour-
“ ney cost me the skin of the lower part
“ of my face, before I reached the resting
“ place, after the fatigue of the morning.”

At another time, when this gentleman
was on Snowdon, he says, “ A vast mist
“ enveloped the whole circuit of the
“ mountain. The prospect down was
“ horrible. It gave an idea of numbers
“ of abysses, concealed by a thick smoke
“ furiously circulating around us; very
“ often a gust of wind formed an opening
“ in

“ in the clouds, which gave a fine and dis-
“ tinct view of lake and valley. Some-
“ times they opened only in one place; at
“ others in many, at once exhibiting a
“ most strange and perplexing sight of
“ water, fields, rocks, or chasms, in fifty
“ different places. They then closed in
“ at once, and left us involved in dark-
“ ness; in a small space they would sepa-
“ rate again, and flie in wild eddies round
“ the middle of the mountains, and expose
“ in parts, both tops and bases, clear to
“ our view. We descended from this
“ various scene with great reluctance; but
“ before we reached our horses, a thunder
“ storm overtook us; its rolling among
“ the mountains was inexpressibly awful;
“ the rain uncommonly heavy; we re-
“ mounted our horses, and gained the bot-
“ tom with great hazard. The little rills,
“ which on our ascent, trickled along the

“ gullies on the sides of the mountains,
“ were now swelled into torrents; and we
“ and our steeds passed with the utmost
“ risque of being swept away by these sud-
“ den waters. At length we arrived safe,
“ yet sufficiently wet, and weary, to our
“ former quarters.”

“ The stone that composes this, and in-
“ deed the greatest part of *Snowdonia*, is
“ excessively hard. Large coarse crystals
“ are often found in the fissures, and very
“ frequently cubic *pirite*, the usual atten-
“ dants on alpine tracts. These are also
“ frequented by the rock ouzel, a moun-
“ tainous bird, and some of the lakes are
“ stocked with char and gwyniads, alpine
“ fish.” The chief wild animals of these
regions are foxes.

The following lines, from the Gentle-
man's Magazine, * on this mountain, are so

* Written by Miss Locke.

energetic

energetic and full of beauty, that I could not resist the temptation of transcribing them in this place.

Snowdon, I wish not thou should'st stand array'd
In the full blaze of summer's gaudy noon;
In gloominess thy grandeur is display'd,
And congregated clouds thy brow adorn.

Thy genius thron'd on his aerial seat,
While fierce conflicting elements engage,
Hears the loud thunder burst beneath his feet,
And scouls defiance on their feeble rage.

Snowdon, on thee with savage pleasure fraught,
Whilst fancy rul'd with wonder have I gaz'd,
Travers'd thy dangers in excursive thought,
And shrunk from terrors I myself had rais'd.

How oft I've fancied on the craggy steep,
Striving in vain to heights like these to rise,
Contending with misfortune, oft I weep,
Though fix'd on earth, aspiring to the skies.

The principal lakes visible from the summit of Snowdon, are, on the east,

Ffynon Lâs, the green well; and *Llyn Llwydaw*, the dusky pool. At some distance beyond these are the *Capel Curig* pools; on the west, *Llyn Coch*, the red pool; *Llyn y Nadrodd*, the adder's pool; *Llyn Glâs*, the blue pool; and *Llyn Ffynnon y Gwâs*, the servant's pool; and beyond these again, are *Llyn Cwellyn*; *Llyn Cader*, *Llyn y Dywarchen*, and *Llynian Nantlle*.

The parts of Snowdon, on which the uncommon alpine plants are chiefly to be found, are the east and north-east sides, which form a range of rocks, called *Clogwyn y Garnedd*. These abound in steeps, which render them, at all times, rather dangerous to search, but in particular, after rain, more than at other times, as the rocks become then so slippery, that the footing is rendered very unsafe.

It is a singular fact, that near the top of Snowdon, is a spring of fine clear and well-tasted water, which I understand is seldom increased.

increased or diminished in quantity, either in winter or summer. From it's very elevated situation, it is the coldest I ever recollect to have tasted.

Most of the old writers, who have had occasion to mention this mountain, assert that it is covered with snow all the year round; but this is by no means true, for this, as well as all the other mountains of Wales, are generally entirely destitute of snow from the beginning of June till about the latter end of October, at which time it commonly begins to fall.

Giraldus Cambrensis,* most incredibly relates, that an eagle used to frequent this mountain, at certain periods, in expectation of war, that he might glut his appetite on bodies of the slain, and that in sharpening his beak he made a large hole in one particular stone on which he always perched.

* Itin. Camb. Syl. Gir. Camb. Lib. II. c. 9.

The summit of Snowdon is so frequently enveloped in clouds and mist, that except when the weather is perfectly fine and settled, the traveller through this country will find it rather rare to get a day sufficiently clear to permit him to ascend the hill. When the wind blows from the west, it is almost always completely covered. And at other times, even when the day seems very favourable, it will, from its great height and its attraction of the clouds, sometimes become enveloped on a sudden, and remain in that state for several hours. For my own part, I think it much more interesting when the clouds just cover the summit, for at these times, from their suddenly breaking and closing, the most sublime and pleasing ideas are excited.

It has been said, and very generally believed, that from the top of this mountain the sun is seen to rise from the sea. Many travellers have gone up in the evenings,

ings, but owing to the atmosphere being generally clouded about that time, I never heard but of one or two, besides Mr. Pennant, who had been so lucky as to see it rise at all; and those who have seen it, have found, that they had been misled in supposing it to emerge from the water. The mere inspection of the map of England, is quite sufficient to satisfy any person of the folly of such a supposition; for if the sun is seen to rise from the sea, from the top of Snowdon, it must either rise from a point more westerly than the west coast of England, or otherwise, some part of the German ocean must be visible from hence, which I believe no one will contend to be possible.

Snowdon was formerly a royal forest, and warrants were issued for the killing of the deer, but these were all extirpated before the year 1626.*

* Pennant's Tour II. 175. who quotes Gwydir MSS.

This

This mountain, held as sacred by the antient Britons, was their *Parnassus*. They have a proverb extant at this day, that "*whoever sleeps on Snowdon, will awake either a poet or a madman*;" probably arising from their conceiving, that upon a person's awaking in this elevated region, the stupendous objects around, which so suddenly present themselves to him, must either inspire him with the *furor poeticus* or *Awen*, as the Welsh term it, or otherwise must deprive him of his senses.

Many tourists have put themselves to great trouble, in representing the almost innumerable difficulties, which they pretend to have encountered in their journeys up this mountain. To provide against these pretended difficulties, one recommends a strong stick with a spike in the end, as a thing absolutely necessary. Another advises, that the soles of the shoes should be set round with large nails; and
a third

a third inveighs against attempting so arduous and so difficult an undertaking in boots. I can only say, that I think to have nails in the shoes, and to take a stick may be both useful in their way, but if a person is in good health and spirits, he will find that he can do very well without either. I should recommend to the traveller, to take sufficient time; to be upon the journey by five or six o'clock in the morning, when the sun has not yet got much power, and when the air is cool and refreshing. The chief thing required, is a little labour, which by going gently along will be rendered very easy. There is also another advantage in having plenty of time, by frequently stopping to rest himself he will be enabled to enjoy the different distant prospects, as they rise above the mountains, and to observe how the objects around him gradually change

in

in their appearance as he rises higher and higher.

It will be always necessary to take a guide, and some kind of provisions for refreshment; for the traveller up this mountain will certainly find the want of such, before he returns. A small quantity of spirits will also be found useful, as spirits are not only much more pleasant in these cold alpine regions, but as there is always plenty of water to be had, they are more portable than any kind of liquor which will not bear dilution.

A late tourist,* without any real foundation for the assertion, remarks, that a very small quantity of any powerful liquor, in these ethereal regions, is sufficient to intoxicate:—that the guide who attended him,

* The Rev. Richard Warner, of Bath, who published about two years ago, a Walk through Wales.

mentioned his having nearly fallen from one of the precipices himself, in consequence of drinking a glass of brandy; and that, during the summer preceding that in which he was in Wales, one of a party of gentlemen, from London, had been so affected, by the same quantity taken on the summit of Snowdon, that he actually got a severe tumble, which though not fatal, produced some painful bruises.

Left any of the readers of this present work, from having read this account, may be induced from the dread of accidents, similar to these, to neglect taking along with them that kind of refreshment, which, in my opinion, is necessary towards rendering themselves comfortable in these cold regions, it is incumbent on me, to inform them, that the writer of the account has very much mistaken the fact. By the advice of the clergyman, who attended me in this and my other mountain excursions,

we

we always took along with us a pint of brandy, the whole of which we used to drink, without experiencing even the slightest degree of intoxication. And he has frequently remarked to me, that strong liquors would, by no means, intoxicate a person so soon upon the mountains, as they would below.

After I had seen Mr. Warner's account, I was at Beddgelert, and enquired of William Lloyd, the schoolmaster there, who had attended him as guide, and from whom he said he received the information, as to the truth of it. The man told me, that he certainly recollected having informed Mr. Warner, that it was a very dangerous thing for a person to be intoxicated upon the mountains, the truth of which is sufficiently evident. But so far was this man from thinking, that a single glass of spirits would produce any ill effects, that I was sometime afterwards one in a party of five,
when

when he advised a bottle of rum to be taken along with us, which we finished without any one being in the least the worse for it.

The track I have laid down for the Traveller, at the beginning of this chapter, from Dolbadarn Castle to the summit of Snowdon, is upon the whole, very good, lying in general, over ground covered with turf, and not having a fourth part of the rocks that any of the other roads have. Having since I went this journey been no less than seven different ways, to and from the top of Snowdon, I am enabled to say, that this is by far the most easy and agreeable, being neither so steep, rocky, or dangerous as any of the others. I do not suppose it possible, that from any other place a person can ride to the top, on account of the great number of pointed rocks which intercept the road. Mr. Warner, in his Walk through Wales, seems to have entertained a different opinion: for speaking of a Farm in Gwynant, beyond

beyond Beddgelert, he says, that the father of the present tenant, who attended constantly the market at Caernarvon, in order to avoid a route, rather circuitous by the turnpike road, constantly crossed the mountain by the track, *which he had pursued*. Thus the poor fellow, in order to avoid a circuitous route, used to cross over the highest peak of the mountain, and go by Dolbadarn Castle (the way he went) to Caernarvon; by this means going near twenty miles instead of fourteen, by the regular road; certainly not an English method of avoiding a circuitous route. The fact was, that he went up a hollow, near which his house stood, called Cwm Llân, crossed over *the foot* of Snowdon, and came into the turnpike road, leading from Caernarvon to Beddgelert, not far from Llyn Gwellyn, that he might save a more circuitous track down Gwynant and round by Beddgelert. It would have been utterly impracticable
for

for him, on account of the huge masses of rock, which are in different places scattered up and down, if he had desired ever so to cross from Cwm Llân immediately over Snowdon to Dolbadarn.

I should think Mr. Ashton Smith, who is, I understand, the owner of much land about Llanberis, might find it a profitable, certainly an useful speculation, to build a small comfortable Inn somewhere near Dolbadarn castle. Perhaps, to repair the castle itself for this purpose, and place some out-houses near it, would be found the least expensive mode of doing it. The advantages would be very great. Being situated in the heart of the mountains, the botanical traveller, the mineralogist, and the artist, would be all induced to resort to it as a situation exactly suited to each of their occupations. Nor would the traveller on pleasure; find less inducements than they. From hence Glyder, and the mountains around it, on one side of the vale, and

Snowdon * and his companions, on the other, can certainly be visited, with greater ease and advantage than from any place whatever. The Vale of Llanberis, the village, and the romantic pass where the rocks rise, almost perpendicularly, from each side of the road, for betwixt three and four miles beyond it, the cataract, the castle, and the lakes have each a separate claim upon the Traveller's attention. The only serious objection that can be made against it, is, that as part of the present road from Caernarvon is so wretchedly bad, the expence of repairing that, to make it a tolerably good carriage road, would be very great. This is certainly true; but when all the advantages of building a house in this very eligible situation are counterbalanced with that, I am confident that every objection will be completely done away.

* The distance of Dolbadarn from the summit of Snowdon is not quite four miles and a half; from Beddgelert it is six miles.

CHAP. X.

EXCURSION TO THE SUMMIT OF SNOWDON
FROM LLANBERIS.—FFYNNON FRECH—LLYN
LLWYDAW—LLYN GLÂS—ROMANTIC SCENERY
—ANOTHER EXCURSION FROM BETTWS—BWLCH
CWM BRWYNOG—LLYN FYNNON Y GWÂS.

IN this excursion to the summit of Snowdon, I proceeded about a mile beyond Llanberis, and crossing the brook that runs into the pool, ascended the steep high mountains on the right. After some fatigue, for the sun shone bright, and the reflection from the rocks was very powerful, we arrived at the top of the first range of rocks which overlook the vale I had left. In a hollow on these mountains I came to a pool called Ffynnon Frech, *the spotted well*. This pool is inferior in size even to Llyn y Cwm near Glyder, but the botanist will find that

it contains as many rare plants as that. Here I found *Subularia aquatica*, *Isoetes Lacustris*, and *Lobelia dortmanna*, growing in such abundance as almost to cover the whole of the bottom.

From hence I continued my journey up another steep, and from its top saw two other pools in a vale a great depth below me on the other side of it, one of these was called Llyn Llwydaw, *the dusky pool*, and the other, much smaller, Llyn y Cwm Glâs, *the blue pool in the hollow*. Llyn Llwydaw has in it a small island, the haunt of black-backed gulls during their breeding season, for on this island, it is said, that they annually lay their eggs and hatch their young. I did not descend to either of these, as there seemed nothing about them at the time I was here likely to repay me for the trouble, I contented myself merely with the sight of them from above, and proceeded onward for about
a mile

a mile and a half along the sloping sides of the mountains, till I came to a hollow, called Bwlch Glâs; from whence I once again ascended to the summit of this, the most celebrated mountain in Great Britain.

From the top of the first mountains, after I left Llanberis, the scenery all the way, till I came within sight of Llyn Llwydaw, was awfully rude. It was one continued series of rocks, infinitely varied in their form. The nimble footed sheep that brouzed on their dark sides, and skipped along their tremendous precipices, looked down upon us with the utmost composure, fearless of any danger from their seemingly precarious situations. In some places the rock, overhanging the path, seemed ready to start from their beds, threatening destruction to the traveller who had dared their gloomy shade.

R 3

I was

I was much pleased with this part of my
ramble, for I love

———these lonely regions, where, retired
From little scenes of art, great Nature dwells
In awful solitude.

The latter part of the excursion, along
the sides of the mountains, was rather un-
pleasant. The stones I had to traverse for
above a mile were so small and loose, as
at every step to give way, rendering the
walking not only tiresome but sometimes
very dangerous. The scenery was wild,
but little interesting. The hollow beneath,
hemmed in by the gloomy mountains
around, was from some points of view ra-
ther grand; but this fell far short of what I
had passed. Wandering along this dreary
scene I sometimes heard, sweetly mellowed
by the distance,

———The wildly winding brook
Fall hoarse from steep to steep.

The

The light clouds swept briskly over the mountains, sometimes entirely obscuring them, and at others shewing their serrated tops visible through the thinness of the mist. Amongst the higher rocks I observed the Black Ouzel, *Turdus torquatus*, of Linnæus: it is not an unusual inhabitant of these alpine regions.

I descended from Snowdon this time along what may with great propriety be denominated a mountain staircase, which lies down the rocks immediately over the village of Llanberis. This road was altogether so very steep and tiresome, that I should at any time prefer going a few miles round to venturing down it again.

The day after I made this journey, I ascended Snowden once again from Bettws, a small place about five miles from Caernarvon, in the road leading from thence to Beddgelert. After I had passed the village a little way, I turned to the left, and went

along the meadows, which here extend up the mountain's sides for about half a mile. Leaving these, I after some time, came to Bwlch Cwm Brwynog, *the hollow of the vale of Brwynog*, a kind of gap betwixt two mountains which overlook that vale. This hollow is reckoned about half way from Bettws to the top, and persons who come on horseback usually ride thus far, leaving their horses here to the care of their servants till they return. I passed by Llyn fynnon y Gwâs, *the servants' pool*, so called, it is said, from the servant of a farmer in the neighbourhood having some years ago been drowned there as he was washing some sheep. The road then lay along a pretty steep ridge, one of those that Mr. Pennant has not improperly denominated the buttresses of Snowdon, for at a distance they certainly have the appearance of supporting that vast mountain.

This

This road was much more rocky and tiresome than that from Dolbadarn. In one part I passed for near a quarter of a mile over immense masses of rock, laying upon each other in almost every different direction, and entirely destitute of vegetation.



CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

FROM CAERNARVON BY HOLYHEAD TO AM-
 LWCH.—FERRY INTO ANGLESEA—NAMES OF
 THE ISLAND—GENERAL CHARACTER—ONCE
 JOINED TO CAERNARVONSHIRE—POOL CERIS—
 LLANEDWEN—INSCRIPTION ON ROWLANDS—
 SÜETONIUS' INVASION—BATTLE AT MOEL Y
 DON—PLÁS NEWYDD—CROMLECHE—ANTIENŦ
 MODE OF ERECTING STONE MONUMENTS—
 LLANGFNİ—GWYNDY—HOLYHEAD—CHURCH
 YARD—CHURCH—AMLWCH—PORT.

I Crossed from Caernarvon into Anglesea*
 by the ferry boat, which every day
 takes passengers across the Menai to and
 from the Island, a distance of somewhat

* This Island, which forms one of the counties
 of North Wales, is about 20 miles long, 17 broad,
 and 70 in circumference. It contains about 200,000
 acres of land, and 20,000 inhabitants. It is di-
 vided into seven hundreds, and has 74 parishes, and
 four market towns.

more

more than a mile. The boat goes always at high water, and when ready to set out, one of the men goes about the town blowing a horn, in order to collect together the passengers.

I intended to have gone quite round the Island by Newborough, Aberffraw, and Holyhead; but being informed that the sea had burst a bank near Aberffraw, and that at high-water it covered upwards of a thousand acres of ground, I was obliged to give up this point as not easily practicable. I therefore, instead, botanized along the Anglesea coast as far as Moel-y-Don ferry, and then took the road leading to Holyhead by Gwyndy, an Inn about half way betwixt Bangor and that place.

From this coast the town of Caernarvon, with the straights of Menai in front, and the high grand mountains in the background, were strikingly beautiful; and the scenery altogether, if possible, exceeded in elegance

elegance and majesty what I had before so much admired betwixt Bangor and Caernarvon. Snowdon was perfectly unclouded, and his red sides brightened by the sun, were seen gradually sloping till they ended in a point far above the tops of the adjoining mountains, each of which had it's beauty in the disposition of it's lights and shades, it's prominences and hollows.

This island was, prior to the invasion of the Romans, called Môn, which signified *what is insulated or detached*, and this they latinized into Mona. The Britons called it also Ynys Dowyll, *the shady Island*; Ynys Fôn from it's situation, and Ynys y Cedeirn from it's heroes, or it's powerful and celebrated Priests and Druids.* When reduced by the Saxons, it then, for the first time, received the appellation of Anglesea,

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*, p. 97.

It is by Giraldus Cambrensis denominated the "Mother of Wales,"* since, according to him, when all the other parts failed in their corn, this alone, from it's fertile soil and high state of cultivation, was able to supply them. However true this may have been at the time when Giraldus wrote, it seems to me that it could by no means be so now, for the interior of the Island appeared but very little cultivated. Much of the land lies either undrained and full of turfy bogs, or is full of low pointed rocks. There are indeed some farms in the interior, but it is about the coast that it is in the richest state, and in particular about that part of it which is opposite to Caernarvonshire.

The general face of the country is low, flat, and disagreeable, being in want of

* "*Mon Mam Cymbry*," Itin. Camb. Auctore Syl. Gir. Cambr. Lib. II. c. 7. p. 867.

that

that variety which is always found where there are woods and mountains : for though, in the time of the Druids, this Island is represented as being almost covered with wood, which formed one continued grove, it has at present, very little. There are a few plantations on the south-east coast, but excepting these I recollect no others in the whole Island.

It is a conjecture of Paulus Jovius, an Italian writer of the sixteenth century,* that Anglesea was once joined to the continent of Wales, but from the continual working of the ocean, was, in the course of time, severed from it ; and that, for some while afterwards, the inhabitants of Wales and Anglesea had a communication by a bridge, till the breach became too wide for such a passage to be any longer maintained. If this has ever been the case,

* Descriptio Britannia, 10.

and it is by no means improbable, the last place of separation seems to have been at that part near Bangor ferry, for there the channel is at present much the narrowest, and at this place is still to be seen a trace of small rocks jutting out in a line across the channel. Besides these there are also other great splinters of rocks tumbled down, and really appearing as if the sea had consumed the soil in which they had originally been bedded, leaving the rocks bare and rugged, and the stones and broken shivers in the bottom of the channel, heaped upon one another.

In the hollows and cavernous interstices of these fallen and broken rocks, for an hour or two at the beginning of the flood, from the tides flowing in at each end of the straights, and meeting here, the sea violently boils and fluctuates, making it for that time a dangerous whirlpool. This part of the channel is called Pool Ceris,
and

and is a place extremely dangerous in the navigation of large vessels, which must consult the critical season, and be conducted by a skilful pilot.

In this Island the princes of North Wales resided, from the time of Roderic Mawr, in the ninth century, for near four centuries, till the reign of Llewelyn the last prince.* Their palace was at Aberffraw. I have been told that some of it yet remains, forming part of the walls of a barn. It was in this palace that the celebrated code of Laws, founded by Howel Dda, *Howell the good*, about the year 940, was constantly kept.

About three miles from the place at which I landed, I passed Llanedwen, the village where Henry Rowlands, the learned author of *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*, was interred. He was instituted to the vicar-

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*, p. 172.

age of this place in October 1696, and died in the year 1723. He lies under a black marble slab which contains this inscription, his own composition:

M. S.

Depositum

HENRICI ROWLANDS

de Plâs Gwyn, Clerici,

Hugies Ecclesiæ Vicarii;

Qui hinc cum hisce Exuviis

Per spiritum Jesu,

Animam interea refocillantem

in ultimo die

Se fore resuscitatum

Pia fide sperabat;

ac inde,

TRIUMPHANTE MISERICORDIA

In eternum cum Christo gaudium

Fore susceptum,

Quod maxime anhelabat;

id est

Esse semper cum Domino.

Obiit 21. die Novembris

Anno Salutis 1723

Ætatis suæ 68.

Spiritus ubi vult spirat.

LAUS TOTA TRI-UNI

Omnia pro nihilo nisi quæ tribuebat egenis

Ista valent cum artes pereant et scripta fatiscant.

Not far from Llanedwen is the place where Suetonius Paulinus, the Roman General, first landed when he invaded this Island, and put an end to the power of the Druids. About a stone's cast from the shore is a field, now called Maes Mawr Gâd, or Maes hîr Gâd, *the field of the great or long army*, and a little to the east of it, just on the shore, is a place called the Rhiedd, or *the chief men's post*. The foot soldiers passed over in flat-bottomed boats, and the horsemen by fording and swimming, which appears to have been sufficiently easy, as the stream is here rather narrow, and at low ebb the water is even now seldom above a fathom or two in the deepest part.

Tacitus

Tacitus has given us a most animated description of the actions of the Druids in defence of their temples and sacred groves, and of the horror with which the Roman soldiers were struck on observing their mysterious rites. “ Stat pro littore diversa
“ acies, densa armis virisque, intercursan-
“ tibus scæminis in modum furiarum, veste
“ ferali, crinibus dejectis, faces prefere-
“ bant; Druidæque circum, preces diras
“ sublatis ad cælum manibus fundentes.
“ Novitate aspectus percutere militem, ut
“ quasi hærentibus membris, immobile
“ corpus vulneribus præberent. Dein co-
“ hortationibus ducis, et se ipse stimu-
“ lantes, ne muliebri et fanaticum ag-
“ men pavescerent, inferunt signa, ster-
“ nuntque obvios et igni suo involvunt.
“ Præsidium posthac impositum vicis, ex-
“ cisque luci, sævis superstitionibus sacri.
“ Nam crurore captivo adolere aras, et
S 2 “ hominum

“ hominum fibris consulere Deos fas habebant.”*

Moel y Don is celebrated as being the place where part of the army of Edward I. experienced from the Welsh a severe defeat, attended with great slaughter. This happened in the year 1282. Edward had led his men against the Welsh, who had retired

* Tacite Annales, Lib. XIV. c. 30.

“ On the shore stood a mixed army in close array and well armed. Women were running about with frantic gestures, clad in black, their hair dishevelled, and brandishing like furies their torches. All around were Druids, with their hands uplifted towards heaven, pouring out the most direful imprecations. The novelty of the spectacle struck the astonished soldier with horror, and his motionless limbs, affixed to the spot, were resigned to every wound. At length animated by their commander, and rousing one another that they should not be intimidated by a womanly and fanatic band, they brought forward

retired amongst the mountains about Snowdon for safety, and he not daring to attack them in their fastnesses, sent over a party of men into Anglesea, and encamped on the bank of the Menai, near this place. Here he ordered a bridge of boats of breadth sufficient to permit sixty men to pass abreast, to be built across. Whilst he was at Conwy Castle, and before this was quite boarded over, several of the English nobility, and about three hundred armed men, at the ebb of the tide, rashly crossed over it. The Welsh from the mountains perceived this, and when the tide had re-

“ward their ensigns, overthrew all who opposed
“them, and involved *the Britons* in their own
“fires. When the battle was ended, they placed
“garrisons in the towns, and cut down the groves
“dedicated to the most horrid superstitions, for
“there they sacrificed on their altars with the blood
“of their captives, and consulted the gods by the
“inspection of human entrails.”

turned and cut off access to the nearest part, they suddenly rushed upon them, and assailed them so furiously that they were all, except Sir William Latimer, who, from the goodness of his horse, got back again, either put to the sword, or driven into the water and drowned. There perished in this encounter thirteen knights, seventeen young gentlemen, probably officers commanding in the army, and above two hundred soldiers.*

I left the Holyhead road at Moel y Don, and went about a mile to see the grounds of Lord Uxbridge at Plâs Newydd, in which I had been told there were some Druidical remains. These I found, they are two Cromleche behind the house. The largest is about thirteen feet long, twelve broad, and the upper stone, which is in

* Powel's History of Wales, p. 372. Matt. West. p. 370. who has mistaken the Menai for the Conwy. Holinshead's Chronicle, II. p. 281.

some parts about four feet in thickness, rests upon five upright supporters.

The cromlech * seems to have been intended for nothing more than a sepulchral monument, for under several of them in Cornwall and other parts of England, bones have been found buried. They appear to have been the originals of our present altar tombs, which are but a more diminutive and regular kind of cromlech.

That they should ever have been used as altars in the Druidical sacrifices, as most persons have supposed, is impossible, for the upper stones were generally too small,

* The word *Cromlech* is British, and signifies a stone that is of a flat or concave form, or that inclines or bends downwards. Mr. Rowlands, without any other apparent reason than to support his hypothesis of the cromlech being constructed for the Druidical sacrifices, derives it from the Hebrew *Cærem luach*, a devoted stone or altar. See *Mona Antiqua Resp.* p. 207.

and too lofty for a fire to be kindled on them sufficient to consume the victim without burning the officiating priest, not to mention the horrid rites with which the Druid sacrifice was attended, and which there would not be room to perform in so perilous a station. The upper stones of several of them were so thin that the intenseness of the sacrificial fire would have cracked and broken them.

Some have asserted that they were intended as places of worship; but there is just as little reason for this supposition as the former, for in many the space beneath is so small as scarcely to admit even a man to creep into them: and besides this, many of them were erected on barrows or heaps of loose stones—a very uneasy situation for devotional offices.*

* See Borlase's *Antiquities*, p. 210, &c. where this subject, as well as every other part of Druidical antiquity, is treated at great length.

It has been attempted, and I think with some degree of success, to prove, that by the application of the lever and inclined plane alone, without any other powers whatever, it is possible to raise and erect some of the largest stone monuments we have in this island. In order to do this, we may imagine that they chose places where they found, or made where such were not ready to their hands, small mounts of firm and solid earth for an inclined plane, flatted and levelled at the top. Up the sloping sides of these they might, with great wooden levers upon fixed fulcrums, and with balances at the ends of them to receive into them proportionable weights, and with hands sufficient to guide and manage the engine, by little and little, heave and roll up to the top the stones they intended to erect. Laying these down there, they might dig holes in that earth at the end of every stone intended for a column

or

or supporter, the depth of which holes was to be equal to the length of the stones; and then, which with their levers could easily be done, the stones might be raised on end and let slip into these holes. These being now well closed about with earth, and their tops being made level with the top of the mount, the other, flat stones to place upon them, might now be rolled up in the same manner as the others, and it was only placing these incumbent flat stones on the tops of the supporters, properly poised and fastened, and cutting away the earth from between them, almost to the bottom, and there would then appear what are called stonehenge, rolbrick, and the British cromlech; and where there was no incumbent stones, the upright columns and pillars, which we now see remaining in many parts of the kingdom. This is the easiest and most natural method that can be imagined for the erection of those

those stupendous monuments of antiquity, and it appears very probable that this was the method used by the British mechanics, who from their early communication with the Egyptians and Phœnicians, probably obtained their mechanical knowledge from these great masters of science.*

Besides the two cromleche I have mentioned, I found nothing deserving of particular notice either in the house or grounds at Plâs Newydd, except the situation, which is indeed beautiful. The house, an elegant building, stands upon the bank of the Menai, almost surrounded by woods, and commands an elegant picturesque and extensive prospect of those British alps, the mountains of Caernarvonshire.

I left this place, and pursued my route along the great Irish road towards Holy-

* Rowland's Mona Antiq. Rest. p. 95, 96.

head.

head. About five miles from Gwyndy I passed through a pretty little village, called Llangefui, romantically seated in a vale, with much wood about it.

I slept at Gwyndy, *the wine house*, an Inn standing by itself at equal distances from Bangor and Holyhead. At this house I believe the best of accommodations may be had, but being frequented by all persons going to or from Ireland, it is frequently so full of company as to be found unpleasant to all parties. When I was here I was unlucky enough to be only just in time to secure the last spare bed, but being pretty well tired I was glad to be in possession even of that, bad as it was. I can scarcely give an opinion, except on the authority of others, respecting this house, for when all were so extremely busied I, a lone traveller, received, as I could have expected, but little attention.

In

In the morning I proceeded towards Holyhead,* distant about thirteen miles. This place, besides Holyhead, is called *Caer Gybi*, *the fort of Gybi*, from it's having been the residence of Gybi, son of Solomon, Duke of Cornwall, and pupil of Hilarius, Bishop of Poitiers. Being consecrated a bishop for his distinguished zeal against the Arians, he settled here about the year 380, where he is said to have founded a small monastery.†

This town is situated in an island at the extreme point of Anglesea, but the dividing channel, except when the tide is in, is generally passable without boats. It has lately been rendered more populous from it's having been, for some years past, the place of chief resort for passengers to and

* So called, says Holinshed, from the number of holy men that were interred there. *See his Chronicle.*

† Tanner's *Notitia Monastica*.

from

from Ireland. The distance from hence to Dublin is about twenty leagues, which the packets generally make in twelve hours. They have been known to perform it in six, and in stormy weather they have on the contrary been kept at sea for two or three days. The passage from Holyhead is much shorter, and always looked upon as far less dangerous than from either Liverpool or Parkgate.

The church-yard is on a rock close above the sea; it is a quadrangle of about two hundred and seventy feet by a hundred and thirty. Three sides are inclosed by strong high walls, and the fourth nearly open to the sea, having only a parapet, which is defended by steep rocks. It is asserted by some writers, that this church-yard was a place fortified about the year 450, by Caswallon, law hîr, *Caswallon the long banded*, son of Eneon Urdd, King of Cumberland, and Prince of North Wales. This prince
had

had been sent by his father to rid the country of Sirigi, a chieftain of the Irish Picts, who having a short time before landed in Anglesea, and routed the inhabitants, was about to settle there. He was attacked at this place, near which he had secured his fleet, and the young and heroic prince slew him with his own hand, and routing his forces, drove them entirely out of the island.* Mr. Pennant † is of opinion, from the masonry of the walls, that it claims a far higher antiquity than the above: he thinks it has been a Roman fort.

The church, which is dedicated to St. Gybi, is a handsome embattled edifice, built in the form of a cross, and is supposed to have been once a college, but the name

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua Rest.* p. 147. Carte's *History of England*, I. 187.

† *Tour in Wales*, II. 277.

of it's founder is not known.* It was founded before 1291, because it is rated in the Lincoln taxation. The number of prebendaries is not known; there were at least twelve, that number being mentioned in the Pension List in 1533. The revenues at the dissolution were valued at twenty-four pounds.† This college was granted in the 7th of James I. to Francis Morris and Francis Phillips. It afterwards became the property of Rice Gwynne, Esq. who, in 1648, bestowed on Jesus College, Oxford, the great tythes for the maintenance of two fellows and two scholars,‡ and since that time the parish has been served by a curate nominated by the college.

* Mr. Pennant from the History of Anglesea, p. 29. says "Maelgwyn Gwynedd, who began his reign in 580, is said to have founded a college here."

† Tanner's Notitia Monastica.

‡ Tanner's Notitia.

Holinshed

Holinshed relates a circumstance respecting Holyhead, which I have been able to find in no other author. His words are :
“ Herein I marvel not a little, wherein
“ *women* had offended that they might not
“ come thither, or at least wise return
“ from thence, without some notable re-
“ proach or shame unto their bodies.”*

This was in the reign of William Rufus, when the Irish and Welsh had joined their forces against the English ; but from whence Holinshed had his authority, or what could be the reason why the women were so abused, I am equally ignorant.

Though Holyhead is much resorted to by company to and from Ireland, it possesses very few attractions for the traveller on pleasure. The island on which it stands, is seven or eight miles long, and in its sides strangely indented. It is in general

* Holinshed's Chronicle, I. 36.

mountainous and rocky, and inhabited by various species of sea fowl that breed upon the steeps, which, towards the sea, are in many places very high.

A number of cross-roads, sufficiently disagreeable, brought me from Holyhead to Amlwch, *near the lake*,* a small market town, about a mile from which is Mynydd Parys, *the Parys Mountain*, that inexhaustible mine of copper, a mine of wealth to all concerned in it. It was on Saturday, the market day, when I got to Amlwch, and the inn was crowded with miners, who were come to receive their pay and purchase victuals for the week, so that it was with some difficulty I could get any thing to eat. This was not owing to any incivility of the persons at the inn, but

* This loch or lake, from which the town takes its name, was situated betwixt the church and the port; but being drained, it was converted into a corn field, in which capacity it yet remains.

merely

merely to their being so busied; for I afterwards found the house much better than I expected in what I had supposed, but without foundation, so obscure a place.

Amlwch is on the sea coast, and is a small place, where much business is done. It is chiefly supported by the copper mines, and is, I understand, in a great measure, inhabited by miners and other persons, who have some concern in them. The church, dedicated to Elaeth, a saint of the British calendar, is a neat modern structure. Not far from this place is the port, from whence the ore brought from the mines is transported to Liverpool and Swansea. This, though small, is extremely well adapted to the business of exportation. It is a chasm between two rocks, running far into the land, and sufficiently large to receive thirty vessels of two hundred tons burthen each. This was first made at the expence of the copper companies, for the convenience of their shipping.

CHAP. XII.

—FROM AMLWCH BY BEAUMARIS TO CAERNAR-
VON.—COPPER MINES—LLANELIAN—SUPER-
STITIOUS CUSTOM—BEAUMARIS—CASTLE—BAY
—LAVAN SANDS—LLANVAES—BATTLE—PEN-
MON—WELL AND CROSS—PRIESTHOLME—PUF-
FINS—YNYS LIGOD.

THE distance from Amlwch to the Anglesea coppermines, is very little more than a mile, and I prevailed upon one of the miners, an intelligent man, who could speak English, to walk with me there. Having ascended to the summit of the mountain, I found myself standing on the verge of a vast tremendous chasm, which the miners call an *open cast*. This I entered, and when at the bottom, the shagged arches and overhanging rocks, which seemed to threaten annihilation to any one who was daring enough to approach them, fixed

fixed me almost motionless to the spot. The roofs of the work having in many parts fallen in, have left some of the rudest scenes imagination can paint, and the sulphureous smell arising from the kilns in which the ore is roasted, made it seem to me like the vestibule to Tartarus.

Hac inter Elysium nobis; at læva malorum
Exercet pœnas, et ad impia Tartarus mittit.

Virg. *Æn.*

'Tis here in different paths the way divides,
The right to Pluto's golden palace guides;
The left to that unhappy region tends,
Which to the depth of Tartarus descends;
The seat of night profound, and punish'd fiends.

The mountain, owing to the sulphureous fumes from the works, is so entirely destitute of every kind of vegetable production for above half a mile on every side, that there is not in that space so much as

even a lichen to be found.* I was almost suffocated the whole time I was in the mines, and a day or two afterwards, when on my way to Beaumaris, the wind blowing over the mountain, I found the fumes extremely disagreeable at the distance of at least a mile from the works, so powerful is this poisonous vapour. I was much surprised to see the miners appear so healthy as they do. Their complexions are in general somewhat fallow, but certainly less so than I could have supposed it possible, considering the kind of employment they are engaged in for near twelve hours every day.

* Since this account was written, I have been informed, that the proprietors and agents of the mines have made vast and expensive improvements in agriculture in this neighbourhood, and that they entertain hopes that they can still cultivate the mountain.

Here

Here are two mines which join upon each other. Of these Lord Uxbridge is possessed of one half, and the other is betwixt the Reverend Edward Hughes of Kinmael, near St. Asaph, and Thomas Williams, Esq. of Llanedan, the member for Great Marlow in Buckinghamshire. The latter proprietor holds his share upon lease from Lord Uxbridge, which expiring soon, Mr. Hughes and his Lordship will then become the sole proprietors.

There have been various conjectures as to the etymology of Mynydd Parys, *the Parys mountain*. Some say that it was anciently called Mynydd Pres, the brass mountain, others Mynydd Parhous, *the durable or inexhaustible mountain*; and again, others that it had its name from Judge Paris, who married a female of the family of Penrhyn in Caernarvonshire. An intelligent friend of mine, an inhabitant of the neighbourhood, seems to think, that

as it is yet called Mynydd Trysglwyn, *the woody mountain*, the word *Parys*, synonymous with *Trysglwyn*, may have been also used, and that it received it's name from the circumstance of it's being formerly covered with furze and underwood. In confirmation of this opinion, he informs me that there are persons now living who can remember it's being thus covered: they say, the wood was first destroyed by being cut down to roast the ore with, and that from the fumes, it has, since that time, never been able to get up again.

It is generally believed that the Romans got copper ore from this mountain; for there are yet left what are thought to be vestiges of their operations, and very antient stone utensils have at different times been found here.

From the time of the Romans till the year 1764, these mines seem to have been entirely neglected. Copper had about two
years

years before this period been found here, and Messrs. Roe and Co. of Macclesfield, had, with a mine in Caernarvonshire, a lease of part of the Parys mountain from Sir Nicholas Bayley, the father of the present Lord Uxbridge, which expired about nine years ago. They for a long time spent much money in making levels to drain off the water, and were about to give up any further attempts, but their agent was determined to make one final experiment in another part of the mountain. This succeeded, for in less than two days, ore of almost pure copper was met with not two yards from the surface, which proved to be that vast bed which has since been worked to such advantage. The day that this discovery was made was the 2d of March, 1768; it has been ever since observed as a festival by the miners. The Rev. Edward Hughes, who was the owner of another part, in consequence of this success,

cess, began a like adventure, which has also succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations of the time.

The bed of ore, which is of unknown extent, is in some places twenty-four yards in thickness, and the proprietors are said to raise annually from six to seven thousand tons of merchantable ore. This is worth from three to six pounds a ton, and an idea of the wealth of these mines may be formed, when it is known, that the Macclesfield Company have had fourteen thousand, and Mr. Hughes thirty thousand tons upon the bank at the same time.* The number of hands employed are upwards of a thousand.

The ore is got from the mine partly by picking and partly by blasting, after which it is broken with hammers into small pieces by women and children armed with iron

* Pennant's Tour, II. 266, 267, 268.
gloves.

gloves. It is then piled in kilns of great length, and about six feet high, and set on fire in different places to undergo the process of roasting; for as the ore in its natural state contains a great quantity of sulphur, it is necessary that this should be separated from it by roasting, before it can be fluxed into copper. The sulphur sublimes to the top of the kiln, from whence it is conveyed by a flue connected with it to the sulphur chamber, a place built to receive it, where it condenses, and becomes the flowers of sulphur of the shops. It is afterwards taken from hence, melted in large copper pans, and cast in moulds for sale.

After the ore has been thus roasted, which is rather a tedious operation, taking from three to ten months, according to the quantity in the furnaces, which is generally from three hundred to a thousand tons, it is taken to the slacking pits, places constructed of stone, about six yards long,
five

five wide, and two feet deep, to be washed, and made merchantable. The poorest of this, that is, such as contains from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 per cent. of metal, is then conveyed to the smelting houses at Amlwch-Port; the rest is sent to the company's furnaces at Swansea and Stanley, near Liverpool. By the processes of roasting and washing, though the ore is much reduced in quantity, it is considerably improved in quality; and the water is so richly impregnated with copper, which is dissolved by the acid quality of the sulphur, that by means of old iron immersed in it, according to the German method, it produces such great quantities of fine copper, that the proprietors have obtained in one year upwards of a hundred tons of the copper precipitated from the water. Were this water afterwards evaporated, it would yield green vitriol at nearly the rate of two hundred tons of vitriol for each hundred tons of iron, which,
at

at three pounds per ton, might produce very good profit to the undertakers, if any should settle such a manufacture there.*

Besides this, the proprietors have another artificial method of producing copper, this is by placing great quantities of iron of any kind whatever, either new or old, though for the sake of convenience they generally procure new plates, cast for the purpose, in rectangular pits, similar to those used in the above process; they are about thirty feet long, twelve broad, and two deep, through which they turn the water that is drawn from the beds of copper, which is highly impregnated with the metal. The

* Mr. Aikin, in his Journal of a tour through North Wales, p. 140, which I have lately seen, says, that there are here works for making green vitriol and alum in small quantities, the property of a separate company, but to these strangers are not admitted. Before this work came into my hands I had not heard of them.

iron

iron becomes dissolved by the acid, and is suspended in the water whilst the copper is precipitated; care is taken to turn the iron every day in order to shake off the incrustation of copper formed upon it, and this is continued till the iron is perfectly dissolved. The workmen then drain off the water, and rake together the ore in the form of mud, which, when it is become, by drying, of the consistency of a softish paste, they bake in ovens constructed for the purpose, and export it, with the other ore, to Liverpool or Swansea. One ton of iron immersed in this manner, produces near two tons of copper mud, each of which, when melted, will produce sixteen hundred weight of copper; this sells at a considerably higher price than the copper which is fluxed from the ore.

This method of obtaining copper by means of iron, has been long practised in Germany, but has only been known amongst

us of late years ; and the first finding of it out was owing entirely to accident. From the copper mines at Arklow, in the county of Wicklow in Ireland, a great quantity of water issues, which is strongly saturated with the vitriol of copper. One of the workmen having accidentally left an iron shovel in this water, he found it some weeks after, but so incrusted that it was thought to be changed into copper. The proprietors of the mines in pursuance of this hint, made proper pits and receptacles for the water, and have obtained, by means of iron bars put into them, such quantities of copper, that these streams are now become of as much consequence as the mines themselves.

The sides of the dreadful hollow from whence the ore is taken, are nearly all perpendicular, but in one place was sufficiently sloping to permit my walking to the bottom, a depth of about fifty yards. Along
the

the edges, and in general hung by ropes over the precipices, are stages with windlasses or *whimfies*, as they here term them, from which the men who work upon the sides, are lowered by cords. Here, suspended in mid air, they pick a small place for a footing, cut out the ore in vast masses, and tumble it with a thundering crash to the bottom. In these seemingly precarious situations, they make caverns in which they work for a certain time, till the rope is lowered to take them up again. Much of the ore is blasted by gunpowder, eight tons of which, Mr. Pennant says, are annually used for that purpose.

This process of blasting must frequently be attended with danger, as the men have been known to be so careless as not to be sufficiently distant when the explosion has taken place. The manner in which it was done was quite novel to me. They bore a hole in that part of the rock they wish to blast,

blast, about the width of a very wide gun barrel, and of depth in proportion to the quantity to be thrown up. At the bottom of this they lodge their gunpowder, and then taking an iron rod, made about two feet in length, and tapered quite to a point, they place it in the hole, and fill it up on all sides with stones, clay, &c. ramming it hard down with an iron, projecting at the bottom, as thus:



in which is made a nick, that it may pass freely round the rod. When it is filled up, and well hammered down, the rod is taken out, and a straw filled with gunpowder, substituted in its place. A match is then lighted and put to it with, as they express it, as much time in it as to permit

them to get away, that is, of length sufficient before it burns through and lights the powder, to suffer them to escape out of the danger attendant upon the explosion.

Several of the shafts which have been formed for taking off the water, are driven very deep: one that I saw, was upwards of a hundred and sixty feet below the open bottom of the mine. I got the miner who attended me to fix a candle on the edge of one of the buckets by which they draw the water up, and it was really curious to watch it in it's dark and confined descent, till it became a mere speck of light, and then immersing in the water was lost.

Since the first forming of these mines, they have been the graves of many unfortunate persons, either from the roofs falling in, the stages giving way, or the ropes breaking. But a few weeks before I was
there,

there, three men were all killed at once by the breaking of a rope.

I was informed that those miners who worked by the day, received upon an average no more than fourteen pence. Others, who work, by what they term the *bar-gain*, are paid a certain sum per ton for getting the ore. The mine companies seem to take great care in providing for all that have any concern whatever in the works, for besides supporting the poor by their own voluntary donations, which are now betwixt seven and eight hundred pounds a year, they prevent a great number of the infants, of the aged and infirm, from applying for relief, by giving them light and easy employment, and this is an average expence of three hundred pounds a year at least, besides surgeons and apothecaries bills, which are seldom less than seven or eight hundred a year.

The mines have increased the value of lands of the parish from about £1400. to £5000. a year and upwards; the number of houses from two hundred to a thousand and upwards, and the population from about nine hundred to seven or eight thousand.*

About two miles east of Amlwch, and not far from the coast, is the village of Llanellian. The church is of very antient foundation, being originally founded about the year 540 by Elian Cannaid, the British Hilary, to whom Cafwallon law-hîr had given many lands and franchises about this place, which I understand are held in his name by the freeholders of them to this day.† It is rather a handsome building, and contains portraits of St. Elian

* Letter to the Bishop of Bangor, Appendix, p. 57.

† Rowland's *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*, p. 156, 183.

and

and the Apostles. Adjoining to the church is a chapel, in one of whose walls is a polygonal closet of wood, having at the back of it another which could be entered from another part. From this the villagers relate, that, in the times of Popish superstition, the priests returned oracular answers to those enquiring. The front closet, which is called St. Elian's chest, used to contain the offerings that were made to him, but is now employed for other purposes by the superstitious of the country. Persons of both sexes, of all ages, and sizes, are to enter the small door way, and if they can succeed in turning themselves round within the narrow limits of the place, which measures only betwixt three and four feet in height, about four feet across the back, and eighteen inches wide, they believe that they shall live for at least twelve months afterwards; but if they do not succeed in this difficult undertaking, they give themselves

up as lost : for it is, they say, a certain omen that they must die within the year. I have been told, that it is curious to see a stout lusty fellow, weighing sixteen or eighteen stone, striving to get into these narrow confines, with as much confidence of succeeding as a stripling a yard high. And when he fails in his attempt, to see him, contrary to all reason, fretting because his body, which contains in solid bulk more than the place could hold, were it crammed into all corners, cannot be got in. But when we consider, that superstition and enthusiasm have generally so little to do with reason, we must not wonder that this should add to the heap of incongruities that have already been given to us.

Llan Elian was formerly a sanctuary or place of refuge, confirmed by a charter from Caswallon law-hîr. Of this charter there are copies yet in existence.*

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*, p. 147.

In digging a grave in the church-yard, about four or five years ago, in a part which had not for some ages been used for interment, a deep trench was discovered, running for about twenty yards transversely across, which was found filled with human bones. It is supposed to have been the place of interment after some severe battle.

The distance betwixt Amlwch and Beaumaris is said to be sixteen miles; of this, from experience, I can say nothing; for I was under the necessity of going some miles round, as it happened to be high water, and the road across the sands at Dulas Bay was quite overflowed.

The entrance into Beaumaris is very pretty; the bay and the castle, with Penmaen mawr and the Orme's head at a distance, close up the end of the road, which lies down a steep hill, and is pleasingly shaded on each side with trees.

The town is finely situated on the western Bank of the Menai, just where it opens into an extensive bay. It is in general neat and well built, but one street is very good. Near it is Baron Hill, the charming seat of Lord Bulkeley.

The castle, which stands in the grounds of Lord Bulkeley, is quite close to the town, and covers a considerable space of ground, but from its lowness, it fails in exciting particular attention. It has consisted of an outer ballcuin or envelope, surrounded with a broad ditch, flanked by several round towers, and had, on the east side, an advanced work, called the Gunner's walk. Within these was the body of the castle, which is nearly square, having a round tower at each angle, and another in the centre of each face. The area is an irregular octagon, about fifty-seven yards from north to south, and sixty from east to west, and in the middle of the north
side

fide is the hall, twenty yards long and twelve broad. The porter's lodge is a Bridewell.*

There has been a communication round the buildings of the inner court by a gallery two yards broad, which is yet in a great measure entire. In recesses in different parts of the sides of this are square holes, which seem to have had trap doors opening into a kind of dungeon beneath. The use of which, unless for securing prisoners, I have not been able to learn. They must have been descended by ladders, as there are no remains of steps in any of them. The two eastern towers served also as dungeons, and the descent to them was dark and narrow, as were the galleries around them.

On the east side of the building are the remains of a very small chapel, arched and ribbed with pointing and intersecting arches.

* Grose's Antiquities of England and Wales.

Between each of the Gothic pilasters is a narrow window, and behind some of them are small closets gained out of the thickness of the wall.

The castle was built by Edward I. about the year 1295, sometime after he had founded those of Caernarvon and Conwy, in order to secure more firmly his possessions in this island. He at the same time changed the name of the town from Bonover, as it was then called, to Beaumaris, a name derived from the French, indicative of its pleasant situation in a low ground.* From this, and its being near the bay, he had an opportunity of forming a great foss round it, and of filling it with water from the sea. He also cut a canal in order to permit vessels to discharge their lading beneath the walls; and even so lately as within this century, iron rings

* Holinshed's Chronicle, II. 294. Stow's Annals, p. 110.

remained

remained affixed to them, which had been made for the purpose of mooring ships or boats.*

Sir William Pickmore, a Gascon knight, was appointed by Edward I. the first governor.†

It was given by Henry IV. very soon after he had obtained the crown, to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, for life, in reward no doubt for the services he had done him in the reign of his predecessor, Richard II.‡

A manuscript in the Harleian collection,§ records that Richard III. in the first year of his reign, granted to Sir Richard Huddleston, Knight, the constableness and captainship of the castle and town of

* Pennant's Tour, II. 243. † Ibid. 244.

‡ Dugdale's Baronage, I. 278.

§ Marked N°. 433; it is quoted in Grose's Antiquities.

Beaumaris. According to another manuscript which describes it, the salary of the constable was forty pounds. Twenty-four soldiers were allowed for the defence of it and the town, at fourpence a day each. They were commanded by a captain, whose annual pay was £12. 13s. 4d. and the porter was paid £9. 2s. 6d. per annum.

This castle was extremely burthensome to the country, on account of the frequent quarrels which took place betwixt the garrison and the people of the country.

From the time of Sir Rowland Villeville, alias Brittainne, the reputed base son of Henry VII. and constable of the castle, the garrison was withdrawn till 1642, when Thomas Cheadle, deputy to the Earl of Dorset, then constable, put into it men and ammunition. In 1643 Thomas Bulkeley, Esq. soon afterwards created Lord Bulkeley, succeeded: his son, Colonel Richard Bulkeley, and several gentlemen, held

held it for the king till 1646, when it was surrendered to General Mytton, who was immediately made governor, upon honourable terms. It is now the property of the crown.*

In 1653 the annual expence of the garrison was seven hundred and three pounds, and in 1696 the garrison consisted of a governor, who, besides his pay as captain, had 2*s.* a day : a gunner, who had 1*s.* 8*d.* a mattsross (a foldier who assisted the gunner) who had 10*d.* a company of foot, consisting of a captain, at 8*s.* a lieutenant at 4*s.* two serjeants at 1*s.* 6*d.* each ; two corporals at 1*s.* each, and one drummer and eighty foldiers at 8*d.* each per day, with an allowance of a shilling a day for fire and candle for the guard.†

* Whitelock's Memorials, p. 213. Pennant's Tour, II. 244.

† Grose's Antiquities.

When

When Edward I. built the town, he surrounded it with walls, and made it a corporation, endowing it with great privileges, and lands to a considerable value. It sends one member to Parliament.*

The bay of Beaumaris forms a fine opening before the town, and ships, it is said, lie secure in it, even in stormy weather. The water is, under the town, six or seven fathom deep when the tide is out; but this deep channel scarcely extends more than a quarter of a mile in width; the other three miles, to the village of Aber, being one continued bed of sand, called the Lavan Sands. These, the Welsh people suppose, were antiently quite free from water, and formed a habitable part of Caernarvonshire; which seems by no means improbable, since Mr. Pennant † has brought such decided proof of the incroachment of the sea at Aber-

* Pennant, II. 245.

† Ibid. 335.

geley, a village near the coast, on the other side of Orme's Head, about eighteen miles distant. He gives us an epitaph in the church-yard, of which this is a translation :

" In this church-yard lies a man who
" lived three miles to the north of it."

But as a more certain evidence, he had observed, at low water, far from the clayey banks, a long tract of hard loam, filled with the bodies of oak trees tolerably entire, but so soft as to be cut with a knife as easily as wax.

About a mile from Beaumaris, near the seat of Sir Robert Williams, Bart. and not far from the shore, stands the poor remains of the house of Franciscan Friars, founded by Llewelyn ap Jorweth, Prince of North Wales, sometime before 1240, called Llan-vaes, or the Friars. There is now so little of it left, that it forms only part of the walls of a barn. The church was dedicated to St. Francis. Here were interred

tered Joan, a natural daughter of King John, the wife of Llewelyn, a son of one of the kings of Denmark, Lord Clifford, and many barons and knights who were slain in the Welsh wars.*

The church, and other buildings, were destroyed soon after the death of Llewelyn, in an insurrection, headed by his relation, Madoc. It was afterwards restored, and again almost ruined by Henry IV. on account of the Friars having espoused the cause of Owen Glyndwr, who had risen against him. His son, Henry V. relieved it, and established a provision for eight

* Powel's History of Wales, p. 293. Stow's Annals, p. 167. Leland's Collectanea de Rebus Britannicus, I. 53. An instrument in Rymer's Foedera, vol. IV. part. II. p. 83. has the following:

“ Pro fratribus minorum de Llanvayfii in insula
 “ nostra de Anglefye———Considerantes quod in
 “ eadem domo corpus tam *filiae regis Johannis pro-*
 “ *genitoris nostri quam filii regis Daciae necnon corpora*
 “ *domini de Clyfort, &c. sepulta existunt.*”

Friars,

Friars, but on the condition that only two of them should be Welshmen.*

At the dissolution, Henry VIII. sold the convent and its possessions to one of his courtiers. They afterwards became the property of a family of the name of White, (now extinct) who built here a good Mansion. It is at present the property of Lord Bulkeley. The stone coffin of the Princess Joan now serves as a watering trough for horses.†

Near this place, in the year 819, a severe battle was fought betwixt the Welsh and the Saxons under their leader Egbert, who had invaded the island, and given it then, for the first time, the name of Anglesea. The Saxons seem to have proved victorious; but they were soon afterwards dispossessed of it by Merfyn Frych, the

* Tanner's Notitia. Pennant, II. 248, who quotes the Sebright MSS.

† Pennant, II. 247.

Welsh prince, who after some bloody contentions entirely cleared his country of those invaders.*

Two miles north of Friars is the priory of Penmon, which consists at present of very little more than the ruinous refectory and part of the church. This was a priory of Benedictine monks, dedicated to St. Mary, and endowed, if not founded, by Prince Llewelyn ap Jorwerth, before the year 1221. In the 26th of Henry VIII. the revenues were valued at £47. 13s. 3d. in the whole, and £40. 17s. 9d. clear.†

Near Penmon is a well, surrounded with a wall, and stone seats, having two doors

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*, p. 172.

† Tanner's *Notitia*. It was besides Penmon, called Glannach, St. Syriol, Præstol, and Priestholme; in the latter names it seems to have been confounded with the neighbouring island, called Priestholme, where the priory is supposed to have had possessions. The Welsh now frequently call Penmon, *Llenach*.

or entrances. On the wall are initials, supposed to be those of some one of the Bulkeley family and his lady, who either built or repaired it. And in the park of Sir Robert Williams, about a quarter of a mile distant, is an antient cross about six feet in height, the shaft of which is curiously ornamented with checquered work, very neatly executed. The upper part of it has been broken off. These, no doubt, belonged formerly to the monastery.

Not quite a mile from the shore is Ynys Seiriol, *Seiriol's Island*,* called now Priestholme. It is supposed to have been once an appurtenant to the monastery, and there are yet left in it the remains of a square tower. The Welsh have yet a tradition extant, that when the Lavan Sands was

* Seiriol was the son of Owen Danwyn, the son of Eneon Urdd, who chose this place as a religious retreat. He is supposed to have built a chapel here about the year 630. See *Rowland's Mona Antiqua*, p. 183.

habitable, and formed part of Caernarvonshire, they had a bridge across the channel, by which they had a communication with that country. And they yet pretend to shew the remains of an antient causeway, which, they say, was made from this island to the foot of Penmaen bach, near Conwy, for the convenience of persons who used to visit this place, held in former times in most superstitious veneration.*

Priestholme, from the beginning of April to the beginning of August, is inhabited by immense numbers of different kinds of sea fowl, but in particular by that rare species, called Puffin Auk, the *Alca Arctica* of Linnæus. These are birds of passage, and annually resort hither to breed, and one part of the island appears at times to be almost covered with them. They form burrows in the ground, and lay in them one white egg, which is generally hatched in the beginning of July. They are so

* Gough's Camden, III. 697.

affectionate

affectionate to their young, that if they are laid hold of by the wings they will give themselves the most cruel bites on any part of their body that they can reach, as if actuated by despair; and when released, instead of flying away, they will often hurry again into their burrows. The noise they make when caught is horrible, and not unlike the efforts of a dumb man to speak. The time of their remigration is about the eleventh of August. Their food is sprats or sea weeds, which makes them excessively rank, but the young, when pickled and preserved by spices, are by some people much admired. They do not breed till their third year, and they are said to change their bills annually. The channel betwixt Priestholme and Anglesea is celebrated for producing several very uncommon species of fish.*

There

* This account of the Puffin I have extracted from Mr. Pennant: his knowledge of British zoo-

There are to the west of Priestholme three islands, each called Ynys Lygod, *the Mouse Island*; and it appears to me that Giraldus Cambrensis * has mistaken the name of this, when in calling it Ynys Lygod, and saying, that in antient times when possessed by Recluses, who had left the world to enjoy here religious solitude, whenever the inhabitants quarrelled with each other, they were immediately plagued with swarms of mice, which always quitted them as soon as they had laid aside their animosities.

logy is well known, and the authenticity of his information from the Rev. Mr. Davies of Aber, who formerly resided at Beaumaris, no one can doubt. I thought it too curious and interesting a subject to be passed over in silence, and my information could not have been drawn from a more authentic source.

* Itin. Camb. Auc̃. Sylv. Gir. Cambr. Lib. II. c. 6. p. 868.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

FROM CAERNARVON BY CAPEL CURIG TO LLAN-
RWST.—LLANDDINIOLLEN—ANTIEN T FORT—
LORD PENRHYN'S SLATE QUARRIES—NANT
FRANGON—RUDE LANDSCAPE—FALLING OF A
ROCK—Y TRIVAEN—LLYN OGWEN—CAPEL CU-
RIG—VALE—NEW INN—DOLWYDDELAN CAS-
TLE—FEUDS—VILLAGE—PONT Y PAIR—WATER-
FALL ON THE LLUGWY—VALE OF LLANRWST—
GWYDIR WOODS—NEW ROAD.

THE Gentleman who had accompanied me in most of my rambles amongst the mountains of Caernarvonshire, went with me in my excursion to Llanrwst, a town in Denbighshire, by the nearest way, about thirty miles from Caernarvon. He proposed that we should go on a track that lies through the mountains, rather than take the usual road by Bangor and Conwy, which would have been much

more circuitous. We therefore proceeded to the village of Llanddiniolen; about half a mile south-east of which, my companion pointed out to me, upon a considerable eminence, the remains of an antient encampment, called Dinas Dinorddwig. Here is a large area, which has been surrounded by a double ditch and ramparts, but the other remains are very inconsiderable.

We passed some very extensive slate quarries in the mountains, belonging to Lord Penrhyn, and entered the romantic vale of Nant Frangon,* or the beaver's hollow. This tremendous glen is destitute of wood, and even of cultivation, except the narrow slip of meadow which lays along its bottom. The fides, which are truly,

Huge hills, that heap'd in crowded order stand,

* Properly Nant yr Afangcwn. Beaver's have been seen here within the memory of man. See *Owen's Dictionary*. For the account of their having been formerly common in this country, see *Llyn yr Afange* near Llan-ydloes, in vol. II.

suf-

sufficiently repay their want of verdure, by the pleasing and fantastic appearance of the rocks which compose them. These rise abruptly from their base, and stretch their barren points into the clouds, unvaried with shrubs, and uncheered by the cottager's hut.

In the year 1685, part of a rock of one of the impending cliffs became so undermined by storms and rain, that losing it's hold, it fell down in several pieces, and in it's passage down a steep and craggy cliff, dislodged some thousands of other stones, of which many were intercepted in their progress into the valley; but as much forced it's way as entirely ruined a small piece of meadow ground at the bottom, and several pieces were thrown at least two hundred yards asunder. In this accident, one great stone, the biggest remaining piece of the broken rock, made a trench in it's descent as large as the mountain streams usually run in,
and

and when it came down to the plain, it continued its passage through a small meadow and across the river Ogwen, which runs down the vale, and lodged itself on the other side of it. It appears very probable, that most of those vast stones that are found lying in the mountainous vallies, have been thrown there by accidents, similar to this.

The upper end of Nant Frangon is guarded on each side by a huge conical mountain. As I crossed the top of the vale, I was delighted with a very beautiful and unexpected view for nearly the whole length of it, where the mountains down each side, appeared for a great distance falling off in fine perspective.

Y Trivaen,* the mountain on the right, at the head of the vale, received its name from three tall stones standing in an up-

* Y Tri Vaen, the three stones or pillars.

right

right position on it's summit, which from below, had the exact resemblance of three men. Of these there are only two at present, the third having sometime ago tumbled down. These stones were not visible to us till we had passed the vale; but from the road near Llyn Ogwen, we could see them very plainly. The two remaining ones have certainly so much the appearance of human figures, that I am not at all surprized, that many travellers, who have not considered the vast height of the mountain, have been deceived in fancying them Welsh tourists attended by a guide, who was pointing out to them the curiosities of the country around. I was credibly informed that one gentleman stopped his horse near half an hour to watch their motions, but not perceiving them to move off, he at last rode on to Capel Curig, where he mentioned the circumstance and was undeceived. The rock seemed to be altogether

gether composed of large, but apparently loose stones, of all forms, and crossing each other in all directions. We examined it from below with a pretty good glass, and fancied we could perceive the third fallen gentleman laying across a deep chasm, a little to the left of the other two.

The composition of this rock appears very much to resemble that of it's neighbouring one, called Glyder bach.*

Near Llyn Ogwen, a pretty large pool, well stocked with trout, and several other kinds of fish, the country began to change it's rough aspect, and to assume a character less mountainous, which it retained till within a mile or two of Capel Curig,†
when

* See this mountain described in my excursion to Llanberis, vol. I. p. 203, 204, &c.

† The chapel of Curig, a British saint. The following is a translation from a little Welsh poem,
and

when it resumed it's former aspect. This little village, which seemed to consist of little more than the public house and church, did not come into sight till we had got within about half a mile of the place.

The vale of Capel Curig, which is bounded by the British Alps, Snowdon and his surrounding mountains, affords one of the most picturesque landscapes in the whole country.

Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain;
Here earth and water seem to strive again:
Not chaos like, together crush'd and bruis'd,
But as the world, harmoniously confus'd.

In this vale there is that variety, both of wood and water, which most of the other and is the only place in which I find him mentioned:

“ A certain Friar to increase his store,
“ Beneath his cloak, *grey Curig's* image bore;
“ And to protect good folks from nightly harm,
“ Another sells St. Seiriol as a charm.”

A Letter of Lewis Morris, in Camb. Reg. II. 492.

Welsh

Welsh vales are so much in want of, to add to their picturesque effect. Here are two pretty large pools, near one of which Lord Penrhyn is now building a small, but comfortable inn, from a design of his agent, Mr. Wyatt: and I cannot sufficiently admire the taste of this gentleman, in drawing the traveller out of the road, that he may, the more at ease enjoy the many beauties of the vale; for it is situated in a part of the vale, somewhat out of the usual road, but certainly where every thing around may be seen to the greatest advantage. I know not how far he will have the thanks of travellers on business, whose feelings are frequently callous to all the beauties of nature, and whose souls very commonly dote only on their gains. How these will like to be taken a mile out of their way, in order to be forced to enjoy what they never can, I do not know? But I doubt not, that every man of taste will

will feel himself highly indebted to Lord Penrhyn for his truly patriotic exertions in this part of the country, and to Mr. Wyatt's good judgment for an undertaking so agreeable and so useful as the present.

The present public house is somewhat similar, in point of accommodations, to those at Llanberis. We got here some eggs, bacon, and dreadfully bad new ale. They told us they had some dried goat, but though the house was rather famous for this species of food, we declined having any. The kids are frequently killed young, when they are said to eat somewhat like lamb; but I understand the flesh of the old goats is not eatable, unless when salted and dried, and even then it is so strong that it requires a stout stomach to digest it.

After we had ended our repast, we set out again on our journey, and having gone about two miles, we left the road, and

went

went to the right for near three miles further to see Dolwyddelan Castle, an old British place of defence. Its mountainous situation rendered it difficult to find, and it was not till after numerous enquiries that we were put into the track that led us immediately up to it.

This Castle stands on a rocky steep, nearly perpendicular on one side, and in a vale entirely closed in by mountains. The name seems to have been originally Dôl Gwydd Elen*, *the meadow of Helen's wood*; there having been an antient military way which passed through the country, not far from hence, towards the sea-coast of Merionethshire, called Sarn Helen, or Helen's way, supposed to have been originally made by Helen, the daughter of

* It may, though with less probability, have been Dôl Gwydd Elain, the meadow of the wood of the doe.

Octavius,

Octavius, Duke of Cornwall, and wife of the Emperor Maximus.*

The Castle has been but small, occupying the entire summit of the mount on which it was built. It has consisted of two square towers, each three stories high, having one room on a story, and a court yard which was betwixt them. The largest of these towers is, in the inside only, twenty-seven feet in length, and eighteen in width, and the walls are about six feet thick. The walls of the court are entirely destroyed, and of one of the other buildings only a very small part is left.

Who was the founder of this Castle, or what purpose it was originally intended to answer, we have not at this time any documents left to inform us. Most proba-

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*, 165. Camden supposes this Helen to have been the mother of Constantine the Great. See Camden's *Britannia*.

bly, when the feudal system prevailed in Wales, and petty chieftains were engaged in perpetual wars with each other, Dolwyddelan Castle, and others similar to it, may have been built by some of them as places to which they might retreat, where they could reside in security, attended by their vassals and adherents in case they should be necessitated by superior force to quit the plains and more cultivated parts. These castles would also, at the same time, answer the purpose of guarding the passes and defiles amongst the mountains.

Mr. Rowlands supposes * that this, as well as Dolbadarn Castle in the vale of Llanberis, was built so early as the time of Maelgwn Gwynedd, in the sixth century. What the reasons for his conjecture could be I cannot tell, as I have been able to meet with nothing upon the subject in

* *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*, 149.

any other author which has led me so far back.

Jorwerth Drwndwn, or *Edward with the broken nose*, the eldest son of Owen Gwynedd, made this Castle the place of his residence for many years. On the death of his father this prince claimed the crown of Wales his hereditary right, but was unanimously rejected, and only on account of the blemish in his face, so whimsical and indecisive was, at that time, the mode of succession. Upon being thus repulsed from the throne, he retired to this sequestered spot, where it is said his son Llewelyn the Great, who began his reign in the time of Richard I. was born.*

If Dolinchan Castle is, as I suppose, the same with this, Gryffydd ap Tudor, in the reign of Edward I. had, as constable,

* Warrington's History of Wales, and Wynne's Memoirs of the Gwydir Family in Barrington's Miscel. 359.

an annual salary of forty marks paid at the Exchequer of Caernarvon at two different payments.*

In the reign of the same monarch, it appears also to have been possessed by Gilbert, Count of Gloucester; for in May 1283, whilst at this place, he made an agreement with that prince for marriage with one of his daughters.†

Meredydd ap Jevan, an ancestor of the Wynnes of Gwedir, in the reign of Henry VII. purchased the lease of this Castle and the inclosures belonging to it, from the executors of Sir Ralph Berkenet; it having been excepted among the places granted by Richard III. and resumed by his successor. Before that time Hoel, ap Evan, ap Rhys Gethin, a noted outlaw, resided here. As soon as it came into possession of Meredydd, he removed his habitation

* Pennant, II. 145. † Rymer's Fœdera, II. 244.
in

in Evionedd, a hundred in the county, to this Castle, giving this excellent reason:
“ I had rather fight with outlaws and
“ thieves, than with my own blood and
“ kindred: if I live in my own house in
“ Evionedd, I must either kill mine own
“ kinsmen, or be killed by them !”

This gentleman soon reformed the country; he established colonies of the *most tall and able men* he could procure, till at last they amounted to seven score tall bowmen, every one arrayed in a “ Jacket or armolet
“ coate, a good steele cap, a short sword
“ and dagger, together with his bow and
“ arrows; many of them alsoe had horses
“ and chafing slaves, which were ready to
“ answer the crie on all occasions, whereby
“ he grew soe strong that he began to
“ put back and to curb the sanctuary of
“ thieves and robbers, which, at times,
“ were wont to be above a hundred, well

“horfed and well appointed.”* And fuch were the feuds which prevailed around him, that he never dared to quit his houfe without leaving in it a powerful guard. He removed the church of Dolwyddelan, which before lay in a thicket to a more open place by way of fecurity, and whenever he went to it he was attended by twenty tall archers, and a watchman was ftationed on a neighbouring rock, called Carreg y Big, to give notice of the approach to banditti. He ended his ufeul life in the year 1525, and left behind him twenty-three legitimate, and three natural children.†

The village of Dolwyddelan, which is about a mile from the Caſtle, feems, from it's mountainous fituation, to be quite fecluded from the world. It's inhabitants are extremely fimple, and in their manners

* Wynne's Memoirs of the Gwedir family, p. 429.

† Pennant, II. 146.

rather

rather reserved and timid, probably from the unaccustomed sight of strangers amongst them. None of them know any other language than that of their country; and hemmed in as they are, with mountain barriers, I should suppose, that three-fourths of them were never half a dozen miles from home. The village itself is composed of little else than small cottages, there being only one house of a tolerable size that I could observe in the place.

We left this place, and came into the road we had left near Pont-y-Pair, a singular bridge of five arches, not far from Bettws y Coed, *the station in the wood*. This bridge, whose arches are very lofty, is built over the river Llugwy, and both above and below it the bed is covered with such strange masses of rock, that when there is much water in the river it must exhibit a most pleasing scene.

From Pont-y-Pair we went about a mile on the road towards Capel Cerig, and about three hundred yards from it we came to a deep narrow glen, down which the river Llugwy foamed, and a little higher up we were shewn the celebrated cataract, called Rhaiadr y Wenol,* *the Cataract of the Swallow*. The fall and the scenery around it are altogether grand. At the upper part the water is thrown in a sheet down a rock almost perpendicular; but below, its course is varied by its direction over a smooth and slanting bed. The high and wooded banks were enlivened by the different tints of oak, birch, and hazel, hanging from the rocks, which rendered the landscape very fine. Had there been more water we should have seen this cataract to greater advantage, but the dry weather for some weeks had, at this time, di-

* This waterfall is about five miles from Llanrwt.
minished

minished all the mountain streams to mere rills. The station on the side of the stream, opposite to that on which we stood, appeared as if it would take in more of the fall, but though I made an attempt to cross it, I found that still the rapidity of the current rendered that impossible. When the river, after a heavy fall of rain, assumes a more impetuous form, the cataract must certainly be very grand, as the bed of the stream is at least twenty yards over, and the innumerable masses of rock which have, at different times, been carried along with it, and lodged here, opposing it's fury, must throw it foaming into all directions.

A little below the bridge Pont-y-Pair, the Llugwy unites with the Conwy. The latter river rises from Llyn Conwy, a large pool about three miles beyond the village of Penmachno, and though both of them are, before their junction, most furious and broken torrents, they here assume a placid

placid form, and glide, in one tranquil current, silently along.

We stopped a while at Bettws to see an ancient monument in the church, in memory of Gryffydd, the son of David Goch, natural son of Davyd, brother to Llewelyn, the last Prince of Wales. It is a large armed recumbent figure in a recess in the north wall, and has this inscription on one side of it:

" Hic jacet Gruffyd ap Davyd Goch,

" agnus Dei misere me."

The road now brought us into the luxuriant vale of Llanrwst, where the gay tints of cultivation once more beautified the landscape, for the fields were coloured with the richest hues that ripened corn and green meadows could impart. A number of gentlemen's seats interspersed around gave an air of civilization to this valley. We had not enjoyed the beauties of this prospect

prospect long, before we entered the gloomy woods of Gwydir, which afforded a fine contrast to the luxuriance of the vale. The Conwy runs at a little distance from the road, and the silvery reflection of its water shooting through the dark foliage of the trees, gave an additional interest to the scene. Upon emerging from hence, we had again the same open vale, in which the town of Llanrwst, now before us, formed a conspicuous feature, and the extensive landscape thus completed, heightened by the dreary rocks bounding it on each side, has been justly admired by all the lovers of nature, as one of the finest scenes her pencil ever traced.

About a quarter of a mile from Llanrwst, we passed by Gwidir, the old family residence of the Wynnes; but as we were anxious to reach Llanrwst, we deferred the examination of this place till the next day.

The

The road through Nant Frangon, by Capel Curig to Llanrwt, was, till very lately, nothing more than a horse path, and I understand, one of the worst in the country; but Lord Penrhyn, who, for his liberality and public spirit, is certainly entitled to the warmest thanks of his country, a little time ago began, (as I have been informed) at his own expence, to form this into a tolerably good carriage road from Bangor, by his slate quarries, and through Nant Frangon to Capel Curig, from whence Lord Gwydir means to continue it to meet the Shrewsbury road, betwixt Llanrwt and Capel Voelas, leaving Llanrwt a mile or two on the north. The regular stages, when this is finished, will be Corwen, Cynriogen, Capel Curig, an inn which Lord Penrhyn intends to build near his slate quarries, and Bangor ferry.

It is somewhat singular, that this road will lie entirely along the valleys, except
betwixt

betwixt Llyn Ogwen and Nant Frangon, where it passes over a rock so small, that it might, without any very great expence, be cut through.

By this road the distance betwixt Shrewsbury and Bangor Ferry will be shortened near twenty miles, and a coach would be able to run it in almost five hours less time than it does at present by Conwy. The mail, instead of arriving at Holyhead at six o'clock in the evening, would be there by one o'clock at noon, and about every second week by saving a tide, would arrive in Dublin twelve hours sooner than it does now.

Besides these great advantages arising from this new road, the tourist will be able to traverse these, the most mountainous and romantic parts of North Wales, even lolling at ease in his carriage. And by this road the provoking delays and intolerable exactions at Conwy ferry, will be entirely avoided.

When

When I was here Lord Gwydir had but just begun his part, and we had only the old horse path from Capel Curig to Llanrwst. This, however, was tolerable good, but the stupid guides, that they may save about half a mile, seldom direct strangers along it, but most unwisely take them over a very narrow, steep, and rocky path, amongst the mountains.

CHAP. XIV.

FROM LLANRWST BY FFESTINIOG TO CAERNARVON.—GWYDIR—DESCRIPTION OF LLANRWST—BRIDGE—CHAPEL—INN—WATERFALL ON THE CONWY—ANOTHER—GRAY'S BARD—PENMACHNO—FFESTINIOG—INN—FALLS OF THE CYNFAEL—PULPIT HUGH LLOYD CYNFAEL—ANECDOTE OF HUGH LLOYD—VALE OF FFESTINIOG.

THE antient mansion of Gwydir is an extensive building, but without much regularity. It was built about the year 1558,

1558, by John Wynne ap Meredydd.* It took its name from Gwaed-dir, the bloody land, being situated near the place where a memorable battle was fought about 952, between the sons of Howel Dda, and Jevaf and Jago, two sons of Edwal Voel, who had, at their father's death, unjustly assumed the government of North Wales, which was the right of their elder brother Meyric. The sons of Howel left their principality of South Wales to avenge the cause of Meyric; but the others proved too powerful for them, and still retained the throne.†

At a little distance amongst the woods, above this mansion, was Upper Gwydir, a house erected by Sir John Wynne in 1604, apparently for the sake of enjoying

* This date, with the initials I. W. are over the gateway.

† Warrington's History of Wales.

from

from thence the numerous beauties of the vale below, which is here seen in a broad and elegant expanse, nearly as far as Conwy. The house was, not long ago, demolished, but the family chapel is still left. This is a small building, in the Gothic stile, sufficiently neat on the outside, but the roof and some other parts within are decorated with paintings of scriptural figures, most miserably executed.

Both these places are at present, the property of Lord Gwydir, in right of his Lady Priscilla, Baroness Willoughby, eldest sister of Robert, the late Duke of Ancafter, into whose family they passed in the year 1678, by marriage of Mary, daughter and heiress of Sir Richard Wynne, with Robert, Marquis of Lindsey.

Betwixt this place and Llanrwst, is the bridge over the Conwy, constructed in
1636,

1636, by the well-known Inigo Jones.* It consists of three large arches, the middle one of which is fifty-nine feet wide. One of the other two has been rebuilt since Jones's time, and the inferiority of the workmanship is very visible. The inhabitants of Llanrwst *boast* that this bridge is formed upon such nice principles, that if a person thrusts against the stone over the middle arch, the whole fabric may be plainly perceived to vibrate: though by the way, I am by no means inclined to agree with them in this point, I should fancy it

* The Honourable Daines Barrington says, "Mr. Panton hath informed me, from the record from the Quarter Sessions for Denbighshire, that this bridge was directed to be rebuilt in the 9th of Cha. I. by a letter from the Privy Council, Jones being then surveyor of the works. The estimate amounted to £1000. which was to be levied on the two counties of Denbigh and Caernarvon." Barrington's *Miscellanies*, 353.

much better if it was quite firm. So many have tried the experiment, that the stone is now become quite loose. We, for frolic's sake, attempted it, but, except that stone, we found the whole bridge as firm as a rock.

The town of Llanrwst is finely situated on the eastern bank of the Conwy, but has in itself nothing to recommend it to notice. The streets are narrow, and the houses irregular. The church is dedicated to St. Rystyd, or Restitutus, who was a Bishop of London about 360; and adjoining upon it, is a chapel, built in 1633, by Sir Richard Wynne, from a design of Inigo Jones. The church is a plain ill-looking structure, but the chapel is neat and well built.

Against the wall, at the west end of the latter, are five brasses, chiefly remarkable for the excellence of their execution, each, besides an inscription, containing a portrait
of

of the person to whose memory it was finished. One of these, which is by far the best done, is a whole-length figure of Sarah Wynne, the wife of Sir Richard Wynne, who died in 1671. The engraver's name to this is William Vaughan, the person who did the others was Sylvanus Crew. These are on Sir John Wynne, who died in 1626; Sydney Wynne, his wife, who died in 1632; Owen Wynne in 1660, and Mary, the wife of Sir Roger Mostyn, in 1653.

To this chapel has been lately removed an antient monument of Hoel Coytmor, which used to lay in the church, amongst the rubbish under the stairs leading into the gallery. It is an armed recumbent figure, with his feet resting upon a lion. The inscription upon it is:

"Hic jacet Hoel Coytmor ap Gruff."

"Vychan ap Gruff. Aun."

This Hoel Coytmor was grandson to the illustrious personage whose monument we saw at Bettws, and was the owner of Gwydir, which was sold by one of his posterity, to the family of the Wynnes.

Near this is placed a large stone coffin, supposed to have been that of the Prince Llewelyn ap Jorwerth, denominated from his great and valiant actions, Llewelyn the Great. He was interred in the abbey of Conwy, in the year 1240, but upon the dissolution of abbeys in the 26th of Henry VIII. as appears from a brass plate fixed upon it, it was removed from thence, and has remained here ever since.

Besides these there are no other monuments in this chapel deserving of notice, except one, which has on it the following singularly long and curious inscription, containing a pedigree of the Wynne family, from Owen Gwynedd, Prince of Wales,

to

to Sir Richard Wynne, who died in the year 1649.

“ This chappel was erected Anno Do-
“ mini 1633, by S^r. Richard Wynne of
“ Gwydir, in the county of Caernarvon,
“ knight and baronet, treasurer to the highe
“ and mighty Princess Henrieta Maria,
“ Queen of England, daughter to King
“ Henery the Fourth, King of France,
“ and wife to our Sovereign King Charles.
“ Where lieth buried his father S^r. John
“ Wynne of Gwydir, in the county of
“ Caernarvon, knight and baronet, son
“ and heyre to Maurice Wynne, son and
“ heyre to John Wynne, son and heyre to
“ Meredith; which three lieth buried in
“ the church of Dolwyddelan with tombs
“ over them. This Meredith was son
“ and heyre to Evan, son and heyre to
“ Robert, son and heyre to Griffith, son
“ and heyre to Carradock, son and heyre
“ to Thomas, son and heyre to Roderick,

“ Lord of Angleasy, son to Owen Gwy-
“ nedd, Prince of Wales, and younger
“ brother to David, Prince of Wales ;
“ who married Eme Plantageinet, sister to
“ King Henery the Second. There suc-
“ ceeded this David three princes ; his
“ nephew Leolinus Magnus, who married
“ Jone, daughter to King John ; David
“ his son, nephew to King Henery the
“ Third ; and Leoline, the last Prince of
“ Wales of that house and line, who lived
“ in King Edward the First's time. St.
“ John Wynne married Sydney, who lieth
“ buried here, the daughter of St. Wil-
“ liam Gerrard, knight, Lord Chancellour
“ of Ireland ; by whom he had issue St.
“ John Wnne, who died att Lucca in
“ Italy ; St. Richard Wynne, now liveing ;
“ Robert Wynne, who lieth here ; Ro-
“ ger Wynne, who lieth here ; William
“ Wynne, now liveing ; Maurice Wynne,
“ now liveing ; Ellis Wynne, who lieth
“ buried

“ buried at Whittford, in the county of
“ Flint; Henery Wynne, now liveing;
“ Roger Wynne, who lieth here, and two
“ daughters; Mary, now liveing, married to Sir Roger Mostyn, in the county
“ of Flint, knight; and Elizabeth, now
“ liveing, married to Sr. John Bodvil, in
“ the county of Caernarvon, knight.”

In the church is some curious carved work, said to have been brought there after the dissolution from the neighbouring abbey of Maynan. The river Conwy runs close past the church yard, from whence there is a fine prospect of the bridge and the high woods of Gwydir behind it. In this river Salmon are frequently taken, and in the months of February and March great numbers of smelts. The tide reaches no farther than Trefriew, about a mile and a half from Llanrwst, to which place only the river is navigable for small vessels.

About three miles north of Llanrwst stood the abbey of Maynan, to which, in the year 1283, the monks were removed by Edward the First from Conwy. The revenues of this abbey at the dissolution, were valued by Dugdale at £162. 15s. 0d. and by Speed at £177. 10s. 10d.* A large old house built out of the ruins, is all that is now to be seen.

The Eagles Inn, the only one in the place where post horses are kept, is, when not full of company, a comfortable house; but during the summer season it is frequently so crowded, as to render it very unpleasant. From this house guides may be had to accompany the traveller to any of the curiosities of the neighbourhood.

About five miles from Llanrwst we turned over some fields on the left of the road leading to Penmachno, to see a small

* Tanner's Notitia Monastica.

waterfall on the river Conwy. The height of this is not very considerable, being only twelve or fourteen yards. The scene was clad with wood, and the bed of the river extremely rugged.

A mile further on, we stopped at a fulling mill near a bridge, Pont y Pandy. Here is a cataract, called Rhaiadr y Craig Llwyd, truly romantic and picturesque. It is not very lofty, and the river, from want of water, flowed in two streams; but the black rock that parted them, being the most rugged imaginable, rendered it, though not quite so tremendous, yet infinitely more beautiful than if it had been hidden by the foaming water coming down it. The high banks on each side are ornamented with pendent shrubs, and a mill and rude wooden aqueduct (which conveys water to an old overshot wheel) overgrown with mosses and grass, came in to complete this elegant landscape. The descent to the bottom was
steep

steep and difficult, yet I thought my trouble well repaid by seeing the fall to much greater advantage than from above, for from hence it seemed increased in height, and many of the prominent and pointed rocks, before hidden, came into the view.

The river accompanies the road to some distance beyond this waterfall. Where they parted, we left the road for a while, and wandered along the banks of the stream for some time, till we came to a most wild scene of wooded and projecting rocks, overhanging the black and dismal stream. A grassy ledge, at some height above the water, on the other side, reminded me most forcibly of the scene where Gray has placed his Bard :

High on a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conwy's foaming flood,
Rob'd in the sable garb of woe,
With haggard eyes, the poet stood ;

(Loose

(Loose his beard and hoary hair
Stream'd like a meteor to the troubled air)
And with a master's hand, and prophet's fire,
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.

From this scene, we returned to the road, and proceeded onwards over a mountainous, though not either very romantic, or entertaining country, till we reached Penmachno, *the head of the Machno*, an odd looking village, built almost in a circle round the church. From hence we continued our journey, over a still mountainous, but dreary country, till we came to the village of Ffestiniog, *the place of hastening*. This little place and the vale near it, have been justly celebrated by the elegant pen of Lord Lyttleton, who made a tour through Wales in the year 1756.

There happened to be a fair, when we were at this place, and as we chose to put up with any inconvenience, rather than be pestered with the vociferous curiosity
of

of a set of drunken fellows, we were taken from the inn into an adjoining building, and shewn up stairs into a bed-room, the most dirty and disagreeable I ever was in. After we had satiated our thirst, as well as we could, with what they called brandy and water, the best beverage they could produce us, but which, by the bye, I should as soon have taken for Burgundy as brandy, we went by a foot-path, which leads from opposite the end of the house, to see the falls of the Cynfael. These are, the one about three hundred yards above, and the other three hundred yards below, a rustic stone bridge over the river, to which the path led us.

The upper fall consists of three steep rocks, over which the water foams into a deep black basin, overshadowed by the adjoining rocks. The other, which I think is nearly as beautiful, is formed by a broad sheet of water, precipitated down a
slightly

7 8

slightly shelving rock, about forty feet high, and darkened by the foliage around it, which closes in almost to the edge of the stream. After the water has reached the bottom of the deep concavity, it rushes along a narrow rocky chasm, where,

Raging still amid the shaggy rocks,
Now flashes o'er the scatter'd fragments, now
Assant the hollow channel rapid darts,
And falling fast from gradual slope to slope,
With wild inflected course and lessen'd roar,
It gains a safer bed, and steals, at last,
Along the mazes of the quiet vale.

Betwixt this cataract and the bridge, is a tall columnar rock, which stands in the bed of the river, called *Pulpit Hugh Llwyd Cynfael*, or Hugh Lloyd's pulpit, the place from whence the peasantry say, a magician of that name used to deliver his nightly incantations.

Of this bard, magician, and warrior, for he claimed all these titles, the following anecdote

anecdote is recorded. That when he was a young man, he made a stone bench to put at the door of his house, not far from hence; his wife's sister was the first who sat upon it. "Molly", said he, "you have sat first upon this bench, and you must pay me three kisses for it." The demand was satisfied. Sometime afterwards his wife died, on which he went to London; leaving his sister-in-law, now married, and her husband. He entered the parliament's army, where he obtained a commission, and was in the army of General Monk at the restoration of Charles II. After having been from home many years, and grown old, he returned to his native country; and going to his own house, one fine summer's evening, he saw his sister-in-law, her husband and children (all grown up) sitting on the stone bench, eating flummery and milk. He asked them, in English,

lish, if they would lodge him that night? but none of them knew a word of English; they however conjecturing what he wanted, shewed him a bed, the best in the house, and asked him to partake of their fare, which he did, and being satisfied, he addressed them in Welsh in the following extempore stanza;

Yn *Ffrainc* y mae gwin yn ffraeth: yn *Llundain*
 Mae llawnder cynnlliaeth;
 Yn *Holand* 'menyn helaeth;
 Y' *Nghymru*, Llymry a Llaeth.

For wines delicious mighty France is prais'd,
 And various dainties are in London rais'd;
 With butter, Holland half the world supplies,
 But milk and flummery more than all I prize.

“What, you are a Welshman, my good
 “friend?” exclaimed his sister. “Yes,”
 said he “I am; it is many years since I
 “had three kisses from the female who
 “first sat on this bench!” He was im-
 mediately

mediately recognized, and all was joy. He then took out of his pocket a large purse, filled with gold, and giving it to her, "Here," said he, "take this, as a
"reward for your hospitality to the old
"English stranger, who is now more than
"fourscore years of age; he requires no
"more for it, than a bed every night,
"and flummery and milk every day while
"he lives." From this time, I believe, he resided with them till the day of his death, which was not till some years afterwards.

Near Ffestiniog ran the antient military way, paved with stones, even along these steep, and almost, inaccessible mountains, called Sarn Helen, or Helen's Way, the work of Helen, the wife of the Emperor Maximus.*

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua*, 165.

Ffestiniog is situated at the head of Cwm Maentwrog, *the vale of Maentwrog*, (improperly called the vale of Ffestiniog) down which we went leisurely, enjoying all the way the most sublime pleasure, in contemplating the beauties of the scene before us. There are few vales in this country, that afford such lovely prospects as this. Many of the high mountains bounding it's sides, are shaded with lofty oaks, and the silver Dwyryd serpentizes placidly and silently along the bottom, amidst the richest cultivation. The sea, at a distance, closes the view; and Traeth bach, a wide arm from it, is seen to receive the Dwyryd, a little below Tan-y-bwlch Hall, which is situated on a rising ground, and embowered in woods, at the north-west extremity of the vale. The little village of Maentwrog, from whence it takes it's name, is seated nearly in the middle of it.

We dined at Tan-y-bwlch Inn, and from thence, proceeding through Beddgelert,* arrived once more at Caernarvon, the place from whence we began our route.

CHAP. XV.

FROM CAERNARVON TO BEDDGELERT. —
 BETTWS GARMON — CASCADE AT NANT MILL —
 LLYN CWELLYN — CASTELL CIDWM — LLYN Y
 DWARCHEN — LLYN CADER — BEDDGELERT —
 CHURCH — EPITAPH — ANECDOTE OF LLEWELYN
 THE GREAT — PRIORY — INN — GWYNANT — DINAS
 EMRYS — MERLIN'S PROPHECIES — LLYN Y DINAS
 — LLYN GWYNANT — CWM DYLI — WATERFALL.

HAVING remained at Caernarvon a length of time sufficient to enable me to examine, pretty carefully, every thing worth notice, within many miles of it each way, I proceeded now on my journey to

* These two places will be described in my journey from Caernarvon to Harlech.

the

the other parts of North Wales. In the promontory of Llyn, that division of the County which juts into the Irish Sea, I was informed, that I should meet with but few objects worthy of attention, except the antient church of Clynog and Criccieth Castle, I therefore determined to omit the former, and visit Criccieth, during my residence at Beddgelert.

In the road to this place, I passed the romantic village of Bettws Garmon, so called from it's church being dedicated to St. Germanus, the Bishop who led on the Britons to the famous "ALLELUIA" victory over the Saxons, at Maes Garmon, near Mold.*

About half a mile beyond it, is a beautiful little cascade and bridge, at a place called Nant Mill. This waterfall would appear to much greater advantage in almost

* See an account of this battle in vol. II.

any other situation than the present, for here the majestic and black mountain of Mynydd Mawr, and the more smooth and regular, though still, lofty Moel Eilir on the left, attract to themselves so much of the attention, and tower so high above it, as to make it appear quite diminutive.

Beyond the mill, Snowdon is seen on the left, rearing his pointed summit into the sky. His red and precipitous cliffs, and huge bulk, compared with the adjoining mountains, render it very easy here, to distinguish him from the rest.

On the right of the road, Llyn Cwellyn extends itself for about a mile and a half. In this pool, during the winter season, are sometimes taken the Red Char,* a species of alpine fish, found in great quantities in Winander Mere and Coniston Water, two lakes in the North of England.

* *Salmo Alpinus* Linnæi

On the farther edge of the lake, and just under Mynydd Mawr, is Castell Cidwm, *Cidwm's Fort*, a high and steep rock, on the summit of which, Mr. Rowlands * says, was formerly a fortification, one of the guards to the entrance of Snowdon, and founded by the Britons, sometime prior to the sixth century. Whether there are any remains of this fort now existing, I am not able to say: the difficulty of ascending to it, and the small importance of the object, deterred me from examining.

Higher up, amongst the mountains on the right, I saw a small pool, about the size of a good horse-pond, called Llyn y dwarchen, *the lake of the sod*, first celebrated by Giraldus Cambrensis, in his Journey through Wales, in the year 1188, and afterwards, by Leland and Camden, as con-

* *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*, 149.

taining a floating island.* The island, eight or nine yards in length, and having a small willow tree growing upon it, is yet in existence. It sometimes remains near the side of the pool, for a considerable while together, and is so firm as to bear cattle upon it, for when it has been dislodged by the wind, a sheep or two have been frequently surprized upon, and waisted with it to the other parts. Nennius † reckons this island, amongst the *mirabilia* of Great Britain.

I passed Llyn y Cader, another pool not far from the road, and shortly afterwards, crossing a bridge, descended through Nant Colwyn to Beddgelert, a village completely embosomed in mountains, whose

* Itin. Cambriæ Syl. Gir. Cambrense Lib. II. cap. 90. Leland's Itin. V. p. 42. Camden's Britannia.

† Nennius's Hist. Brit.

rude and dark sides formed a fine contrast with the meadows of the vale below.

The houses were few and irregular, but the church one of the neatest I had seen. In the church-yard, amongst many Welsh epitaphs, I found the following English one, on the tomb of an Alice Griffith. It's singularity induced me to copy it.

“Thousand fates on death attends,

“Which brings poor mortals to their ends.”

I have introduced this, merely from it's singularity, and not that the English reader may form from it any judgment *whatever* of the state of literature in Wales. Had this been my purpose, I ought, in justice, to have introduced a few against it, from my own country, where the language, in which they were written, was (contrary to the case in this instance) the language spoken. I fear we should gain but little, from a comparison, as the following, from

A a 4

the

the church-yard of Scarborough, in Yorkshire (by no means the worst I have seen) may serve to shew.

“Livest thou Betsey? Yes, with God on high,

“Art thou not dead? Yes, and here I lie.

“I, who on earth with man did live to die,

“Dyed for to live with Christ eternally.”

“She was a buty in her blowm,

“And she was suddenly cut down.”

&c. &c.

There is a tradition extant, that Llewelyn the Great, had a house at Beddgelert, and that being once from home, a wolf, during his absence, had entered it. Upon returning, his grey-hound, called Killhart, came out to meet him, wagging his tail, but covered over with blood; the prince, alarmed at the sight, ran into the nursery, and found the cradle, in which his child had lain, overturned, and the
ground

ground flowing with blood : imagining that the grey-hound had killed it, he immediately drew his sword and slew him ; but upon turning up the cradle, he found the child alive, and the wolf dead. This so affected the prince, that he erected a tomb over his faithful dog's grave, where afterwards the parish church was built, and called, from the incident, *Bedd Cilbart*, or the grave of Kill-hart. From this was also derived a very common Welsh proverb : " I repent as much as the man who " slew his greyhound."

This celebrated dog had been a present to Llewelyn from his father-in-law, King John, about the year 1205. And he was so noted for his excellence in hunting, that his fame was transmitted to posterity in four Welsh lines, which have been thus translated :

The

The remains of famed Kill-hart, so faithful and good,
 The bounds of the cantred conceal,
 Whenever the doe or the stag he pursued,
 His master was sure of a meal.*

Here was a priory of Augustine monks,† of very antient foundation, for it was said by Anian, Bishop of Bangor, who lived in the thirteenth century, to have been the oldest religious house in Wales, except Bardsey.‡ In 1283 this monastery was so much damaged by fire, that in order to encourage benefactors to come forward and contribute towards the rebuilding of it, Anian remitted to all such, who sincerely repented of their sins, forty days of any penance inflicted on them. The value of the revenues at the dissolution, was, ac-

* Jones's Musical and Poetical Relics of the Welsh Bards, p. 75.

† It was called the Abbey de Valle, S. Mariæ Snawdonia. See Tanner's Notitia Monastica.

‡ Rymer's Fœdera, II. 317.

according to Dugdale £70. 3s. 8d. and according to Speed £69. 3s. 8d.* There is no relic whatever of this house at present existing.

The inn, or rather public house, for it is certainly deserving of no better term, is one of the worst I was at during the whole of my journey through Wales, and the charges were beyond measure extravagant. There is only one bed in the whole house, and that is wretchedly bad. The place I was put into for three nights, was a back room; but with the floor, ceiling and boarded partition, all so full of large holes, as to seem only an apology for separation from the rest of the house. I was also so intolerably pestered by myriads of fleas, that if I had not every night been fairly wearied out with my rambles during the day, all the powers of Morpheus might have

* Tanner's Notitia.

been exercised in vain. I may too with propriety add, that the concatenation of smells arising from the fumes of the kitchen below, when joined with those within the room, were such as would not suit a person of nice olfactory nerves. I complained to the servant in the morning, that I had been almost devoured by fleas, and received in answer one of the most singular excuses for filthiness I ever heard, "Dear me, sir," said the girl, "if we were to kill one of them, ten would come to it's burying."

There is, I think, nothing that could induce a person to come to this house but the exquisite scenery around the place, and it is a great pity but some man, with a more liberal spirit than the present miserable landlord, would erect a small neat inn in opposition to this dirty and wretched place. Surely cleanliness and civility would not go unrewarded!

The

The day after I arrived at Beddgelert, I strolled along a vale, called Gwynant, *the vale of the stream*, and I can entirely agree with Mr. Pennant in saying, that this is the most beautiful vale amongst these mountains. It is about six miles long, and in it's whole length affords such a variety of scenery of wood, lakes, and meadows, bounded on each side by lofty mountains, that it is almost impossible to be excelled. The vale of Llanberis is the only one that seemed to me to rival it; but the character of the two are so very different, and the beauty of each so exclusively it's own, that it is almost impossible to compare them together.

On the left, about half a mile up the vale, is a lofty wood-clad rock, called Dinas Emrys, *the fort of Ambrosius*, where once

Prophetic Merlin sate, when to the British king
The changes long to come auspiciously he told.

It

It was to this place that Vortigern,* when he found himself under the general odium of his subjects, and unable any longer to contend with the treacherous Saxons whom he had introduced into his kingdom, retired to hide his shame, and provide for his security. It is probable, that upon this insular rock he erected a temporary residence of timber, with which the country at that time abounded, that lasted him till he went to his final retreat in Nant Gwrtheyrn, or *Vortigern's valley*, not far from Nefyn, in the promontory of Llŷn.†

Many of the antient British and Monkish writers assert, that upon his coming to Dinas Emrys, he attempted to erect a place of defence, but what was built in the day time always disappeared at night ; he there-

* Vortigern was King of Britain from 449 to 466.

† I believe all the Welsh bards agree, that Vortigern resided at this place at the time of his death.

fore consulted with his magicians or learned men, as to what manner he ought to proceed; " they advise that he must find out
 " a child which had no father, and with
 " his blood sprinkle the stones and mortar,
 " and that then the castle would stand as
 " on a firm foundation. Search was made,
 " and in *Caer Merdhin* * was *Merlin*
 " *Emrys*, or *Ambrose*† found; he being
 " hither

* The City of *Myrddin* or *Merlin*, still called *Caermarthen*, in South Wales.

† *Ambrosius ille ex Virgine nobili (patris nomine data opera suppresso) natus; ob mirabilem viri in mathematicis reliquisque omnis generis disciplinis cognitionem a rudi vulgo pro incubi filio habebatur. Lhwyl Comment. Britan. 65. Merlin Ambrosius, who was born at Caermarthen, was the son of a nun, the daughter of a king of South Wales. Jones's Welsh Bards, 23. According to Spencer, Merlin's father was a Roman consul, and his mother a nun, the daughter of Pubidius, King of Mathraval, who, to save her life and honour, invented the story of*
 his

“ hither brought to the king, slighted that
“ pretended skill of his magicians as pal-
“ liated ignorance ; and with confidence
“ of a more knowing spirit, undertakes to
“ shew the true cause of that amazing
“ ruin of the stone-work ; tells them,
“ that in the earth was a great water
“ which could endure continuance of no
“ heavy superstruction. The workmen
“ digged to discover the truth, and found
“ it so. He then beseeched the king to
“ cause further inquisition to be made, and
“ affirmed, that in the bottom of it were
“ two sleeping dragons, which proved so
“ likewise, the one white and the other
“ red ; the white he interpreted for the
“ Saxons whom he had brought over, and
“ the red for the oppressed Britons ; and

his being without a father, which was swallowed
by the credulity of the times. *Faery Queen, lib. II.*
cant. 3. Matt. West. p. 161.

“ upon

“ upon this event in Dinas Emrys, he
“ began those prophecies to Vortigern,
“ which are, to this day, common in the
“ British storie.”*

The more probable account is, that Myrddin Emrys, or Merlin Ambrosius, so called from his being afterwards patronized by Ambrosius, Vortigern's successor to the British crown, was employed, by this prince, to search out for him a secure retreat from the just revenge of his injured people; and that being a skilful architect and mechanic, he selected for him this place, where he superintended the building of the fortrefs. There was another Merlin, frequently taken for this, a native of Caledonia, called Myrddin ap

* Selden's Notes on Drayton's Polyolbion. Matt. of Westminster, p. 161—170, gives a long account of the latter part of Vortigern's life, and a full detail of all Merlin's prophecies.

Morvryn, and Myrddin Wyllt,* who, in the year 542, when fighting under the banner of King Arthur, accidentally flew his own nephew, and in consequence of this, was seized with a madness which affected him every other hour. He fled again into Scotland, and in his lucid intervals composed some beautiful pieces of poetry. This Merlin afterwards returned to North Wales, and was buried in the Isle of Bardsey, in Caernarvonshire.†

Vortigern married his own child by Rowena, daughter of Hengist, the Saxon prince, and had by her one son;‡ and some writers have said, that he was afterwards so much hurt at his crime, that with his own hands he set fire to his house,

* Called also Merlinus Sylvestris.

† Evans's *Dissertatio de Bardis*, p. 77. Jones's *Welsh Bards*, p. 23.

‡ Speed's *Theatre of Great Britain*, I. p. 313.

and in this manner destroyed both himself and his partner in guilt. Others say that his palace was consumed by lightening,* and others again, that it was destroyed by Aurelius Ambrosius and Uter Pendragon,† two sons of Constantine, who having sought out the place of his retirement, set fire to it, and consumed him and his family to ashes.‡ We are not, however, certain that any of these were true, for Vortigern, being considered as the author of all the

* Ibid. Stow's Chronicle.

† So called from his having caused two golden dragons to be cast, one of which he presented to the cathedral of Winchester, and the other he carried along with him in his wars, most probably by way of crest on his helmet. Jones's Welsh Bards, 40.

‡ Whitelock's Memorials from Brute, p. 13. Stow's Chronicle. According to Nennius, the palace that was destroyed must have been that in Nant Gwrtheyrn, for, c. 44. he says, that when Vortigern went to fortify himself at Caer Gwrtheyrn, he gave to Myrddin the castle he had built in Eryri.

calamities which his country suffered, became odious to the people, and the British writers load him with all manner of crimes, and represent him as such a monster of iniquity, that it was not fit for him to go out of the world like other mortals, therefore they invented those various kinds of death, that he might appear to depart from hence under the severest marks of divine vengeance.

I have been informed, that there are some small remains on the top of Dinas Emrys, but that they are very inconsiderable. I did not myself clamber up the rock to examine them.

A little farther in the vale is a pool, in a charming situation, called Llyn y Dinas, *the pool of the fort*, taking it's name from being near Dinas Emrys, and abounding in large and well-flavoured trout. Two miles beyond this is Cwm Llan, a romantic hollow, running into the mountains on the

the right towards Snowdon, which, though the path is, in some places, steep and rugged, may, with a little difficulty, be ascended from hence. Having passed the entrance into Cwm Llan a little way, I came to another pretty little pool, not quite so large as the one I had left, called Llyn Gwynant. Near this pool the vale changes its name to Cwm Dyli, in which is a lofty cataract, called Rhaiadr Cwm Dyli. The rivulet that runs from the Alpine pool, Llyn Llwydaw, in the mountains above, here breaks in foam and spray down the rugged front of a high rock, from whence, soon afterwards, joined by other tributary streams, it runs into Llyn Gwynant.

Some parts of Gwynant exhibit such perfect specimens of picturesque scenery, that in them I could trace all the order and beauty of colouring, so well described by Mason :

—— Vivid green,
Warm brown, and black opaque the foreground bears
Conspicuous ; sober olive coldly marks
The second distance. Thence the third declines
In softer blue, or less'ning still, is lost
In faintest purple.

During my walk along the vale, I observed, in different places, several men busily employed in cutting down the trees, and could not help silently lamenting that the practice of taking away the timber should be so general, not only in this country, but, as I some years ago was sorry to observe, even throughout all the North of England, and about the lakes. Avarice or dissipation, and it's constant follower, poverty, have despoiled the Principality of nearly all it's leafy beauties. Depriving scenery of wood, is ruinous to picturesque beauty ; and if the owners of land do but go on in the manner they have done,

done, for a few years longer, there will scarcely be a tree remaining in all North Wales.

CHAP. XVI.

EXCURSION FROM BEDDGELERT TO THE SUMMIT OF SNOWDON. — CLAWDD COCH — SCENERY — CWM LLAN.

AS I had, upon coming into Wales, made a determination to ascend Snowdon by all the tracks that are usually pointed out to travellers, I for the last time, undertook the task, along with a party of four others, from Beddgelert, William Lloyd, the village schoolmaster, (his scholars being always, during the summer time, engaged in rustic employments) performing the office of guide.

The distance from Beddgelert to the summit being reckoned not less than six

B b 4

miles,

miles, and a lady being one of the party, it was thought best for her to ride as far as she could without danger, and for the rest to walk. In this manner therefore we set out, beginning our *mountain* journey by turning to the right from the Caernarvon road, at the distance of about two miles and a half from the village. We left the horse at a cottage about half way up, from whence taking a bottle of milk to mix with some rum we had brought with us, we continued our route over a series of pointed and craggy rocks. Stopping at different times to rest, we enjoyed to the utmost, the prospects that by degrees were opening around us. Caernarvon and the Isle of Anglesea, aided by the brightness of the morning, were seen to great advantage; and Llyn Cwellyn below us, shaded by the vast Mynydd Mawr, with Castell Cidwm at it's foot, appeared extremely beautiful. In ascending, the mountains,
which

which from below appeared of an immense height, began now to seem beneath us; the lakes and vallies became more exposed, and the little rills and mountain streams by degrees became all visible to us, like silver lines intersecting the hollows around.

We now approached a most tremendous ridge, over which we had to pass, called Clawdd Coch, or *the red ridge*. This narrow pass, not more than ten or twelve feet across, and two or three hundred yards in length, was so steep that the eye reached on each side down the whole extent of the mountain. And I am firmly persuaded that, in some parts of it, if a person held a large stone in each hand, and let them both fall at once, each would roll above a quarter of a mile, and thus, when they stopped, be more than half a mile asunder. The lady who was with us, to my great surprise,

prize, passed this horrid ridge without the smallest signs of fear or trepidation.

There is no danger whatever in crossing Clawdd Coch in the day time, but I must confess, that though I am one of the last to be alarmed by passing amongst precipices, I should, by no means, like to venture, as many do who have never seen it, along this track in the night. If the moon shone very bright I should not, to be sure, mind it much, but a cloud coming suddenly over might even then render it dangerous. There have been several instances of persons who having passed over it in the night, were so terrified at seeing it the next morning, that they have not dared to return the same way, but have gone a very circuitous round by Bettws. I was informed that one gentleman had been so much alarmed, that he crawled over it back again upon his hands and knees.

In

In the hollow on the left, are four small pools, called *Llyn Coch*, the red pool; *Llyn y Nadroedd*, the adder's pool; *Llyn Gwâs*, the blue pool, and *Llyn Ffynnon y Gwâs*, the servant's pool.

Soon after we had passed Clawdd Coch, we became immersed in light clouds, till we arrived at the summit, when a single gleam of sunshine, which lasted but for a moment, presented us with the majestic scenery on the west of us. It, however, only served to tantalize us, for a smart gust of wind obscured us again in clouds. We now sheltered ourselves from the cold under some of the projecting rocks near the top, and ate our dinners, watching with anxiety the dark shades in the clouds, in hopes that a separation might take place, and we be once more delighted with a sight of the grand objects around us. We did not watch in vain, for the clouds

clouds by degrees cleared away, and left us at full liberty to admire the numerous beauties in this vast expansive scene. The steep rock of Clogwyn y Garnedd, whose dreadful precipices are, some of them, above two hundred yards in perpendicular height, and the whole rock, a series of precipices, was an object which first struck my companions with terror, and one of them burst out in exclamation,

———How fearful

And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Shew scarce so gross as beetles.

We now stood on a point which commanded the whole dome of the sky. The prospects below, each of which we had before considered separately as a great scene, were now only miniature parts of the immense landscape. We had around us such a numerous variety of mountains, valleys, lakes,

lakes, and streams, each receding behind the other, and bounded only by the far distant horizon, that the eye almost strained itself with looking upon them. These majestic prospects were soon shut from our sight by the gathering clouds, which now began to close in much heavier than they had done before, and it was in vain that we waited near an hour for another opening; we were therefore at length obliged to descend, in despair of being gratified any more with these sublime views.

We again passed Clawdd Coch, and soon afterwards, turning to the left, descended into the mountain vale, called Cwm Llân, and followed the course of a stream which runs from hence into Llyn y Dinas in Gwynant. This little rivulet entertained us much in it's descent, by being frequently thrown over low rocks, and forming small, but sometimes elegant cascades.

After

After two hours walking, we came into Gwynant, the vale I had with so much pleasure traversed a day or two before, and passing Llyn y Dinas and Dinas Emrys, we soon reached Beddgelert, somewhat fatigued with our long mountain walk.

I observed near a cottage in Cwm Llan, several children employed in gathering the berries of *Sorbus aucuparia*, the mountain ash. I was informed they were getting them to make a liquor, which the Welsh call *Diod-griafol*. This is said to taste somewhat like perry, and is made by merely crushing the berries, and putting water to them, which, after they have remained about a fortnight, is strained off for use.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII

EXCURSION FROM BEDDGELERT TO CRICCIETH.—DEVIL'S BRIDGE—ROCKS—GIRALDUS CAMBRENSIS—SALMON LEAP—ANTIEN'T TRIBUTE—MOONLIGHT SCENE—TRAETH MAWR AND TRAETH BACH—PENMORFA—ANECDOTE OF SIR JOHN OWEN—FORD—CRICCIETH—STORY OF SIR HOWEL Y FWYALL AND HIS POLE-AX.

BEDDGELERT is the place to which travellers usually resort, who wish to visit Pont Aberglâsllyn, *the bridge at the conflux of the blue pool*, or as it is generally called *the Devil's bridge*. It is about a mile and a half distant, but being in the road leading to Tan-y-bwlch, some content themselves merely with stopping a little while, as they pass it, in their journey.

I must, for my own part, confess, I was rather disappointed in my expectations of
this

this bridge. I had somewhere read of an arch thrown across a narrow stream, each end supported by a perpendicular rock, one in Caernarvonshire and the other in Merionethshire;* and perhaps confounding it in some measure with what I had heard of the Devil's bridge, near Hafod, in Cardigan-shire, I had formed a fine high flown idea that I should see an arch thrown across a deep narrow valley, and hanging, as it were, in mid air: but how disappointed, to find it a bridge but little out of the usual form! The grand scenery around, made it at a distance appear quite an insignificant object; but in this I had scope enough for admiration. The road winds along a narrow stony vale, where the dark perpendi-

* Merionethshire is in length, from east to west, 45 miles, and in breadth, from north to south, 34. Its circumference is about 150 miles. It has about 20,000 inhabitants, and contains 34 parishes, and two market towns.

cular cliffs on each side, so nearly approach, as only just to leave width sufficient at the bottom, for the road, and the bed of the impetuous stream which rolls at the side of it. The lofty and rugged rocks, which oppose to us nothing but a broken series of precipices, one above another, as high as the eye can reach, shadow the translucent torrent which thunders over the vast fragments, torn from the precipices above.

It was most probably from this very scene, that Giraldus Cambrensis † asserted of Merionethshire, that it was “ the roughest and most dreary part of Wales, for “ it’s mountains were both high and narrow, and so equally grouped together, “ that shepherds talking or quarrelling on “ their tops could scarcely, in a whole “ day’s journey, come together.” And

† Itin. Camb. Syl. Gir. Cambrense. Lib. II. c. 5. p. 855.

Drayton, * in his unpolished lines, seems to have followed him in opinion :

Of all the Cambrian shires their heads that beare
so hie,

And farths't survay their soyles with an ambitious
eye,

Mervinia for her hills, as for their matchlesse
crowds,

The near'st that are said to kisse the wand'ring
clouds,

Especial audience craves——

A few yards above the bridge, is a small cataract, noted as being a falmon leap. It's height from the bed of the river is about thirteen feet, but when there is a tolerable quantity of water, it is not from the surface more than eight or nine. The falmon come up the rivers in order to deposit their spawn on the sandy shallows, and when stopped in their progress, by rocks or dams, across the water, they have the

* Polyolbion.

power of leaping to a surprising height in order to get over them. This place being only a few miles from the sea, is frequented by great numbers. In the course of an hour, I have sometimes observed thirty or forty of them attempt to get up, but on account of a net which the renters of the fishery place for the purpose, they very seldom succeed. This extraordinary power of leaping so high, seems to be owing to a sudden jerk which the fish gives to its body, from a bent into a straight position. At this place, when tired with making many vain attempts to surmount the barrier, they retire to rest in the still waters below, where they are either taken in nets, or killed by striking them with an harpoon. By the latter method, though it seems extremely cruel, the men are always so certain in their aim, that I have seen five or six killed in less than an hour. The general weight of fish taken here, in the

months of August and September, is from one to eighteen pounds. In October, they become much larger, but the flavour of these are not esteemed so fine as the smaller ones.

The fishery, I have been informed, is the property of a Mr. Wynne, who lets it to the fishermen, at the rent of twelve pounds a year. The fish are sold on the spot generally at threepence or fourpence a pound.

In the reign of Henry IV. this was a royal wear, and was then rented by Robert ap Meredydd. It is not improbable, that in old times, it might belong to the princes of Wales, for salmon was the most useful and valuable fish the Welsh had. It was reckoned amongst the game, and was perhaps the only species of fish that was preserved by their laws.*

* Wynne's Memoirs of the Gwydir family, p. 387.
Pennant's tour II. 192.

In

In my walk to the bridge, I was much amused by a flock of goats, consisting of about forty, that were chasing each other in playful gambols, amongst the rocks above. This was the first time I had seen so many together, since I came into Wales; for they are not now wild, all being private property, and regularly returning home to their folds in the evenings.

The mountains of Merionethshire, were in former times, much infested with wolves. In the year 940, Athelstan marched with an army into North Wales, where he overcame Idwal,* the Welsh Prince, but he afterwards restored him to his throne, on condition that he should do homage to him

* This is generally written *Ludwal*; but Ed. Llwyd, in his notes to Camden, has remarked, that the Welsh never had a prince of that name, and supposes it must have been mistaken for Idwal.

at Hertford, and covenant to pay him yearly a tribute of twenty pounds of gold, three hundred of silver, and twenty-five thousand head of oxen, besides a certain number of hawks and hunting dogs.* But instead of this tribute, when Edgar came to the throne, on account of the country being so much overrun with these rapacious animals, he demanded to be sent to him every year the skins of three hundred wolves, by which means, without any expence to the subjects of the English prince, the whole land was, in the space of little more than two years, entirely cleared of them, and Idwal released from his tribute,

* Strutt's Chronicle, II. 56.—Thus Will. Malmsh.—The Chron. Wrivallen has it "*quinque millia bestiarum*."—The same also has an old French M. S. in the Cotton Library, marked Galba, E. 3. it has it "*V. mille vaches*."

at the end of the third, upon his declaring that they were all destroyed.*

Whilst I was staying at Beddgelert, I found myself one evening almost devoid of employment, and the moon shone so beautifully bright, that I was tempted to ramble alone as far as the bridge. There never was a more charming evening. The scene was not clad in it's late grand colours, but now more delicately shaded, and arrayed in softer charms. The darkening shadows of the rocks cast a gloom around,

* Strutt's chronicle II. 67.—Will. Malmsh.—Holinshed's Chronicle, I. 225.—Whether they were *all* destroyed or not at this time, we are not certain; for after the battle of Colehill, in the reign of Henry II. Giraldus Cambrensis, Lib. II. c. 10. p. 873, relates, that a young Welshman, who had been slain, was discovered attended by his faithful dog, who remained by the corpse the whole time, without food, and defended it from being the prey of birds and *wolves*.

and the faint rays in some places faintly reflected gave to the straining eye, a very imperfect glimpse of the surfaces it looked upon, whilst in others, the moon shot her silver light through the hollows, and brightly illumined the opposite rocks. All was solitude, all serene and mild. The silence of the evening was only interrupted by the murmuring of the brook, which lulled to melancholy, and now and then by the shrill scream of the night-owl, flitting by me in search of food.

The river rushing o'er its pebbled bed
Imposed silence, with a still sound.

The bridge was deserted, and I hung over its battlements listening to the hoarse fall of the water down the wear, and watching as the moon got higher, the decreasing shadows of the mountains. I at length returned, after a most delightful ramble of near two hours.

I went

I went the next morning by Pont Aber-glâslyn, over one of the most tiresome foot-paths, that even this country can boast, to the village of Penmorfa. This path lay over the rocks, which run close by an arm of the sea, called Traeth Mawr, *the great sands*. This walk, though rather painful, was however highly interesting: the lofty mountains ranged in rugged order along the opposite side of the sands, seemed an invincible barrier to the interior of the country—

The mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky.

In the year 1625, Sir John Wynne, of Gwydir, conceived the vast design of recovering the two arms of the sea, called Traeth Mawr and Traeth Bach, for cultivation, by embanking out the water; and for this purpose he applied for assistance to Sir Hugh Middleton, who, in the Isle of Wight,

Wight, had not long before gained upwards of two thousand acres of land from the sea: the affair, however, probably from want of money, was never carried into execution.*

Penmorfa, *the head of the Marsh*, is a small wood-clad village, romantically situated on the western bank of Traeth Mawr, and lies so far out of the usual route, as to have been hitherto but seldom visited by tourists. The church is dedicated to St. Beuno, and within it there is a small monument, in memory of Sir John Owen, a general in the army, and a staunch supporter of Charles I. This valiant commander, after the execution of his royal master, was, with several of the nobles, condemned by the Parliament, to lose his head,

* Sir John Wynne's Memoirs of the Gwydir family in Barrington's Miscellanies, p. 351. Pen-
nant's Tour 184—187.

and in his trial shewed a spirit worthy of so great a man. After his condemnation, with a humorous intrepidity, he made the court a low reverence, and gave them his humble thanks. One of those standing by, asked him what he meant; he replied aloud that "it was a great honor for a poor gentleman of Wales, to lose his head with such noble lords; for by G—, he was afraid they would have hanged him." He however, by good fortune, and the interest of Ireton, who proved his advocate after a few months imprisonment, was set at liberty, and restored to his friends.*

There is a ford from Penmorfa, across Traeth Mawr and Traeth Bach, to the roads leading to Tan-y-Bwlch and Harlech, which saves a very circuitous road by Beddgelert. Crossing these is sometimes at-

* Pennant I. 279.

tended with danger, owing to the tides not always leaving the same level, but frequently washing deep holes in the sand; and it is not by any means safe to attempt this ford without the attendance of a guide.

Criccieth is a little Borough town, contributory to Caernarvon, about three miles distant from Penmorfa, and situated on the north end of Cardigan Bay, and except the few remains of its castle, affords nothing which can claim the attention of the Traveller.* This is situated upon a rising ground, at the end of a long neck of land jutting into the sea. The entrance into it is betwixt two rounders, which are square within, and appear to have been the only circular towers it has had, the others being all square. There have been here two

* Leland says of it in his time, " At Crikith be a
" two or three poor houses, and there is a smaulle
" ryle. There hath beene a franchised now clene
" decayed." Itin. V. 49.

courts,

courts but neither of them very large. The castle has been but a small building, and it is at present in a very ruinous condition. From the eminence, on which it stands, is an elegant view across the bay, towards Harlech, where that fine old castle is seen, backed by the high and distant mountains of Merionethshire.

From the architecture, this castle has the undoubted appearance of British origin, and its reputed founder, Edward I. seems to have done no more than case the two towers at the entrance, whose exterior workmanship is certainly very different from that of their interior. Mr. Rowlands has placed this amongst those castles, which he conjectured were founded before the sixth century.*

After the conquest of Wales, Edward I. appointed William de Leybourn, the con-

* Rowland's *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*, 149.

stable,

stable, with a salary of a hundred pounds, out of which he was to maintain a garrison of thirty stout men, a chaplain, surgeon, carpenter, and mason.*

Sir Howel y Fwyall, a descendant of Colwyn ap Tangno, one of the fifteen tribes of North Wales, was constable of this castle.† This valiant officer attended the Black Prince in the battle of Poitiers, where, with only a pole-ax, he performed such brave and heroic acts ‡ that the prince bestowed

* Sebright MSS. quoted by Mr. Pennant, II. 192.

† He was also constable of Chester Castle.

‡ It is very generally believed in Wales, that Sir Howel y Fwyall, though only on foot himself, took the French King prisoner, who was mounted on horseback. This circumstance is fully accounted for in a MS. given to the Lord Treasurer Oxford, by Mr. Hugh Thomas, and now deposited in the British Museum.

—“ Sir

bestowed on him the honour of knighthood, and allowed him to take for his arms a *pole-ax argent, between three flower-de-luces*, and to add to his name *y Fwyall*, or the Ax. And further to perpetuate the memory of his great services, the prince ordered, at the expence of the crown, that a mess of meat should be every day served up before the ax, with which he had performed these wonderful feats. This, after it had appeared before the knight, was

——“ Sir Howell ap Fwyall, ap Griffith, ap
 “ Howel, ap Meredith, ap Einion, ap Gwgan,
 “ ap Meredith Goch, ap Collwyn, ap Tangno,
 “ called Sir Howel y Fwyall, or Sir *Howel Pole-*
 “ *Axe*, from his constant fighting with that war-
 “ like instrument. It is said he dismounted the
 “ French king, *cutting off his horse's head* at one
 “ blow with his battle-axe, and took the French
 “ king prisoner; as a trophy of which victory, it is
 “ said, that he bore the arms of France with a
 “ battle-axe in bend sinister, argent.” Harl. MSS.
 No. 2298. p. 348. Wynne's Memoirs, 425.

taken

taken down and distributed amongst the poor people. Even after his death the mews continued to be served up as usual, and for the sake of his soul given to the poor, till so lately as the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. There were eight yeoman attendants, called Yeomen of the Crown, appointed to guard this mews, who had each eight-pence a day constant wages.*

CHAP. XVIII.

FROM BEDDGELERT TO HARLECH.—MOUNTAIN ROAD TO TAN-Y-BWLCH—NEW ROAD—TAN-Y-BWLCH INN—MAENTWROG—TOMMEN Y MUR—WATERFALL—IMPENDING SCENERY—LLYN TECWYN UCHA—LLANTECWYN—FINE VALE—HARLECH—TOWN-HALL—CASTLE—MEPHITIC VAPOUR—INN.

FROM Beddgelert I went along, what is generally called, the *mountain* road to Tan-y-bwlch. The other, *low* road, lays

* See the history of the fifteen tribes of North Wales, in Camb. Reg. I. 148. See also Wynne's Memoirs of the Gwydir Family, p. 375.

partly

partly over the sands of Traeth Mawr, and cannot be passed but at low water. The former, from Pont Aberglaslyn, for near seven miles, is the most rude and mountainous way imaginable. The continuation of rocky steep has been found to excessively unpleasant in carriages, that most people prefer getting out, and being on foot the whole way.

There was, when I was here, a new road forming lower down towards the sands, which from every appearance will, considering the country through which it has to pass, be a tolerably level one. This new road is to be brought from near the bridge, and to join that from Caernarvon to Dolgelle, not far from Tan-y-bwlch. I have been informed that when this is completed, there are some designs of running a coach, during the summer time, from Caernarvon to Dolgelle. An undertaking of this kind is likely not only to prove

useful to travellers, but very much so to the country at large.

The present romantic, though uncouth road, for about two miles, commands several beautiful and extended prospects. From one very elevated situation I had a most delightful view of all the fine and mountainous country about me; Harlech and Criccieth Castles were both in sight, and the long extent of ground, forming the promontory of Llyn, was visible even to it's extremity.

At Tan-y-bwlch, *below the pass*, there is only an elegant hall, embowered in woods, the mansion of — Oakley, Esq. and the comfortable little inn, both of which are on a considerable eminence on the north-west side of the vale of Maentwrog. This vale, watered by the little river Dwyryd, which meanders along it's bottom, contrasted with the bleak and dreary mountains of it's sides, from hence
affords

affords a most pleasing prospect. A former tourist * was so much gratified with this scene as to observe "That if a person could
" live upon a landscape, he would scarcely
" desire a more eligible spot than this."

The Inn is a small, but good house, and the inhabitants very civil and attentive. Post chaises are not at present kept here, but the inn-keeper informed me, that as soon as the new road was completed, he probably might attempt a single carriage, if there should be any prospect of success; and this there must be, since Tan-y-bwlch is situated nearly in the centre, betwixt the three market towns of Caernarvon, Bala, and Dolgelle.

On the opposite side of the vale stands the church of Maentwrog, which takes it's

* Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, Esq. who made a tour through Monmouthshire and Wales in the summer of 1774 and 1777.

name from a large stone in the church-yard, called *Maentwrog*, the stone of *Tu-rog*, a British saint, who lived about the year 610, and was the writer of *Tiboeth*, a romantic record belonging to St. Beuno, and formerly kept in the church of *Clynog*, in *Caernarvonshire*.* Dr. Edmund Prys, Archdeacon of *Merioneth*, who was of some celebrity as a Welsh poet, was rector of this place, and is buried here.

In this parish are the small remains of *Mûr Castell*, now called *Tommen y Mur*, where the kings of England used to encamp when they came against North Wales.†

I left *Maentwrog*, and enquiring the road to *Harlech*, proceeded on my journey. At the distance of about half a mile,

* Jones's Welsh Bards, p. 14.

† Sketch of the History of *Merionethshire*, by Mr. Robert Vaughan of *Hengwrt*, in the *Cambrian Register*, I. 191.

I crossed

I crossed a small bridge, when leaving the road, I wandered along a foot path up a wooded valley on the right, for about a mile and a half, in search of a waterfall that had been before described to me, called Rhaiadr dŷ, *the black cataract*; but it was not without some difficulty, and after much ascending and descending, that I found it. In this cataract, which is surrounded with dark and impending scenery, the water is thrown with vast impetuosity over three black and smooth rocks, each in a different direction. Of it's height I could form no idea, as the top of the upper fall, by the winding of the rocks, was not visible from below. The rock that hangs immediately over the fall, was, from it's great height and rude form, a fine object in the landscape, and the whole of the hollow, for some distance below the cataract, extremely grand. I attempted to climb to the upper part, but the rocks

were too perpendicular and slippery to attempt it without danger; therefore contenting myself with seeing as much as I could from below, I crossed the water, and crept along the shelving rocks by the side of the stream, for near half a mile. Here the banks closed in over my head, leaving but a narrow chasm, from which the light was excluded by the dark foliage from each side, and I found myself entering to appearance into the mouth of a deep and horrid cavern. The sides were too steep for me to think of clambering up, and except going quite back again to the cataract, I had no alternative but to penetrate this dismal place. This I soon did, for it continued but a small way; and now finding its banks sufficiently slanting for me to ascend to the meadows above, I was not a little pleased to escape from this abode of damp and horror.

Regaining

Regaining the road I had left, it led me along the side of Llyntecwyn ucha, *the upper pool of Tecwyn*, where I found some pleasant, though less mountainous scenery than what I had just passed. This pool is larger than many of those in Wales, and its waters are beautifully clear. On one side of it is a range of low rocks, composed of a shivery kind of slate, which has mouldered in many places to the bottom in small sharp pieces, almost resembling needles.

Afterwards passing the village of Llantecwyn, and Llyntecwyn isfa, *the lower Tecwyn pool*, I came to a most lovely little meadowy vale, about three miles distant from Harlech, called (as I understood, the Guide) Dol Orcal. After the late uncouth scenery, I here enjoyed to the utmost, the pleasing effect of the green woods and meads in the vale, and the purple heath which concealed and softened

the harsh colouring of the neighbouring rocks.

The whole of this walk from Beddgelert to Harlech, was exceedingly pleasant; and from the continual varying of the scenery, kept the attention alive during every part of the journey.

This road from Tan-y-bwlch is scarcely passable for carriages, but there is another from Beddgelert, along the sands, which may be gone at low water; but guides must be taken who are acquainted with the track, as it is very unsafe to venture without them.

Harlech, once the principal town in Merionethshire, is now dwindled into a small and insignificant village, containing not more than four or five hundred inhabitants. It is in the parish of Llanfair, and is, with its castle, built on a cliff which overhangs the marsh, on the sea coast, near Cardigan Bay. Not far from the
castle,

castle, is an old roofless building, once the town hall; in which, I was informed, the Members of Parliament for Merionethshire continue to be elected.

The castle is yet very entire. It is a square building, each side measuring about seventy yards; and has, at every corner, a round tower. From each of these issued formerly a round turret; all now, except one or two, destroyed. The entrance is betwixt two great rounders, and the chief apartments appear to have been over the gateway, in a building which projected into the court; and at each corner of this building is also a large round tower. The castle was defended, on the east side, by a deep foss; and it's situation, on the verge of an almost perpendicular rock, rendered it impregnable in almost every other part. I have been told, that from the marsh, this fortress, except in it's size, has much the appearance

appearance of the castle of Belgrade, in Turkey.

The evening that I arrived here, the atmosphere was perfectly clear, and I could see very plainly the peaked summit of Snowdon elevated high above all the other mountains. The promontory of Llyn was visible in almost every part; Criccieth Castle seemed scarcely a mile distant; and the fine, though dangerous Bay of Cardigan, lay entirely before me.

The antient name of this fortress was Twr Bronwen, *Bronwen's Tower*; so called from Bronwen,* or *the white-necked sister* to Bren, (or Brânus) ap Llyn, Duke of Cornwall, and afterwards King of Great Britain, who lived about the year 290. It is supposed by some that she resided here,

* She died in Anglesea, and was interred on the bank of the river Alaw, in that island. Mr. Rowlands says, her monument was in existence so lately as in his time. See *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*.

and

and the highest turret, though for what reason I know not, since the present building was founded many centuries after her time, goes yet by the name of Bronwen's Tower.*

It was afterwards called *Caer Collwyn*,† or *Collwyn's* fort, from Collwyn ap Tangon, one of the fifteen tribes of North Wales, who repaired it in the eleventh century, and resided for some time in a *square tower*, then called Bronwen's Tower.‡ The present name, Harlech, is probably derived from the British *Hardd*, beautiful; and *Llech*, a rock, indicative of its situation.

According to some of the antient British Historians, this castle was built by Maelgwn

* Perhaps this tower may have stood upon the site of the antient one of that name, and so have still retained the former appellation.

† It is sometimes, though improperly, called *Caer Colun*.

‡ See the history of the fifteen tribes of North Wales, in the *Camb. Register*, I. 148.

Gwynedd,

Gwynedd, Prince of North Wales, sometime about 530;* and it is generally supposed, that Edward I. founded the present fortress, upon the ruins of the old castle; some parts of which are yet distinguishable from the more modern work of that monarch.

It is evident there must have been a castle here before Edward's time, for in the year 1160, during the reign of Henry II. I find that one John Charlton, being protected by the king, imprisoned here three of his wife's uncles, Llewelin, David, and John.†

Hugh de Wlonkesslow was, in 1283, appointed by Edward the first, constable, with a salary of a hundred pounds; but this salary appears to have been afterwards re-

* Vaughan's sketch of the history of Merionethshire in Camb. Reg. I. 191.

† Powel's History of Wales, p. 215.

duced;

duced; for in some accounts, it was only twenty-six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence, and in others fifty pounds; which was supposed to be both for the Constable and the Captain of the Town. The whole garrison consisted of twenty soldiers, whose annual pay amounted to a hundred and forty pounds.*

In the year 1404, this castle, along with that of Aberystwyth, in Cardiganshire, was seized by the great, but ambitious Owen Glyndwr, during his rebellion against Henry IV. They were both retaken about four years afterwards, by an army which the king had dispatched into Wales, against that sturdy chieftain.†

Margaret of Anjou, the spirited queen of Henry VI. after the king's defeat at North-

* Ayloffe's Welsh Calender, p. 92. and Dodderidge, p. 98, quoted in Pennant's Tour, II. 130.

† Carte's History of England II, 661 and 669.

ampton,

ampton, in 1456, fled from Coventry, and found in this fortress an asylum from her enemies; after narrowly escaping the hands of Lord Stanley, who found and seized her jewels and baggage. From hence, after a short time, she proceeded into Scotland; where, collecting her friends, she marched to Wakefield; near which place she once more attacked her enemy, the Duke of York, who was there defeated and slain.*

Edward IV. soon after he came to the crown, found means to obtain the affections of the whole realm, and make himself master of every part of the kingdom, except this castle and a few others in Northumberland. These he did not think it necessary immediately to attack, perhaps from the expectation, that seeing the whole country continue in quiet possession, they might soon of their own accords sub-

* Carte's England, p. 757.

mit. The idea, however, proved groundless, for Dafydd ap Ifan ap Einion, a staunch and valiant friend to the house of Lancaster, held out in this castle till 1468, near nine years after the coronation of Edward, who, at last, seeing his resolution not to yield till he was absolutely forced to it, found it necessary to send into Wales a large army against him, under the command of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, who, with incredible difficulty, marched his men over the heart of the British Alps to attack him. The Earl besieged the castle, and it was surrendered at discretion on the 14th of April, 1468, when Sir Richard Tunstall, Sir Henry Beltingham, Sir William Stoke, with about fifty other gentlemen, were taken prisoners and committed to the Tower of London.*

Sir

* MS. Chronicle in the Library of St. Peter's College, Cambridge. Stow's Annals, p. 421.

Camden's

Sir Richard Herbert, brother to the Earl, who had commanded the English army during the siege, interceded with the king for the life of the British hero Dafydd ap Ifan ap Einion. The king at first refused, but Sir Richard told him plainly, "That his highness might take his life" instead

Camden's Britannia, II. 338. Carte's History of England, II. 775. Wynn's Memoirs of the Gwydir Family, 398. Vaughan's Sketch of the History of Merionethshire, Camb. Reg. I. 191. Camden says, the road over which the English soldiers marched, is to this day called *Le Herbert*. The names of the valiant defenders of this fortress were as follows:

Dafydd, ap Jevan, ap Einion.

Gruff. Vychan, ap Jevan ap Einion.

Siankyn, ap Iorwerth ap Einion.

Gr. ap Jevan ap Einion.

Tho. ap Jevan ap Einion.

John Hanmer.

Dafydd ap Jevan ap Owen o Bowis,

Rhinallt,

“ instead of that of the Welsh captain ; or
 “ that he would assuredly replace Dafydd
 “ in his castle, and the king might send
 “ whom he pleased to take him out again.”

This prevailed, but Sir Richard received no other reward whatever for his service.*

In the civil wars of Charles I. Harlech Castle was the last in North Wales that held out for the king, being surrendered on the 30th March, 1647, on honourable terms, to Lieutenant General Mytton, when Mr. William Owen was governor,

Rhinallt, ap Gryff. ap Bleddyn of Tower near Mold.

Mawris ap Dafydd ap Jeffre.

Dafydd, ap Einion, ap Jevan Rymus.

Howel ap Morgan ap Jorth Goch.

Ednyved ap Morgan.

Thomas ap Morgan.

John Tudur Clerck.

Gr. ap Jevan ap Jorwerth, *senior*.

See Pennant's Tour, II. 131.

* Pennant's Tour, II. 131.

and the whole garrison consisted but of twenty-eight men.*

Edward I. made the town into a free borough, and confirmed to it several grants of lands and other emoluments. The assizes for Merionethshire, which used formerly to be held here, are now holden at Bala and Dolgelle alternately.

In the winter of 1694, this neighbourhood was much alarmed by a kind of kindled exhalation, which came from a sandy marshy tract of land, called Morfa Bychan, across the channel, eight miles towards Harlech, and injured much of the country, by poisoning the grass in such a manner as to kill the cattle, and firing hay and corn ricks for near a mile from the coast. It is represented to have had the appearance of a weak blue flame, which, by any great noise, such as the firing of

* Whitelock's Memorials, p. 243.

guns,

guns, or the sounding of horns, was easily extinguished. All the damage was done invariably in the night, and in the course of the winter not less than sixteen hay ricks and two barns, one filled with corn, and the other with hay, were burnt by it. It did not seem to affect any thing else, and men could go into it without receiving the least injury. It is said, that though it was seen oftener during the first three weeks than it was afterwards, yet it was observed at different intervals of time for at least eight months.* The occasion of this singular phenomenon is not exactly known. It appears most probably to have arisen from some collections of putrid substances, the vapour coming from which might have been directed towards this place by the

* Letter from Mr. Maurice Jones, inserted in the Philosophical Transactions. See Lowthorp's Abridgement, II. 183.

wind. Bishop Gibson has conjectured, that it might have proceeded from the corrupted bodies of a quantity of locusts, which came into this kingdom about that time, but from the coldness of the climate were destroyed. He says, that a considerable quantity of them were seen lying dead about the shores of Aberdaron, in Caernarvonshire.*

The public house at Harlech, for such it can only be denominated, is kept by a civil man, called Amoyl. The provisions were indeed plain, but the beds, (only two, and those in the same room) considering the smallness of the house and the obscurity of it's situation, clean and comfortable. A guide may be had from this place, who will conduct the traveller either amongst the mountains, or over the sands to Beddgelert.

* Gibson's Additions to Camden's Britannia, (in which Jones's Letter is copied,) p. 659.

CHAP. XIX.

EXCURSION FROM HARLECH TO CWM BYCHAN.
—DRUIDICAL CIRCLES—CWM BYCHAN—
WELSH PEDIGREE—BWLCH TYDYAD—DRWS
ARDUDWY—CROMLECH—DISTANT WATERFALL
—SARN-BADRWYG—OVERFLOWED HUNDRED.

I WENT (conducted by the guide) to explore an obscure vale, about four miles from Harlech, called Cwm Bychan, *the little hollow*. A mile from the town, on a large elevated moor, he pointed out to me, a circle of small stones, about thirty yards in diameter, with another at some distance, surrounding it. From its form and appearance, I am inclined to suppose, that this must have been one of those Druidical circles, in which were holden their *Gorseddau*, or Bardic meetings; for these meetings were always in a place set apart in the open air, in some conspicuous

E e 3 situation,

situation, and surrounded by a circle of stones, having in the centre, a large one, by which the presiding bard, or Druid stood. There was no relic whatever left of the middle stone. This kind of circle was called *Cylch Cyngair*, or the circle of congress. At these meetings, candidates were admitted to the different degrees of Bardism, and on these occasions, it was, that all the oral Bardic poems and traditions were recited, and their laws settled. During these ceremonies, all the Bards stood within the circle, their heads and feet bare, and clad in their uni-coloured robes.

Cwm Bychan is a grassy dell, about half a mile in length, surrounded with the most black and dreary scenery imaginable. On the right of the entrance into it, is a small pool, called *Llyn y Cwm Bychan*, from whose edge *Carreg y Saeth*, the rock

of

of the arrow,* towers, the blackest of the vale. I rested myself for a while on a rock, above the pool, from whence I could at ease observe, and enjoy the rugged beauties of this romantic hollow. From hence the landscape extended in all its magnificence: the vale was seen embosomed in stupendous rocks, black and barren, and enlivened only by the patches of meagre vegetation, lodged on their shelving precipices.

We descended into the hollow, and wandered along the bottom, till we came to the mansion (a true specimen of an antient seat of a Welsh gentleman) lately occupied by Mr. Evan Lloyd, a person mentioned with much respect in Mr. Penant's Tour.† He was able to trace his

* Probably the antient sportsmen took here their station to watch the passing deer, which formerly abounded in these parts.

† Vol. II. p. 125.

descent from Blyddyn ap Cynvyn, one of the princes of North Wales. The pedigree, as a curiosity, I have thought worth transcribing; it is as follows:

Evan ap Edward, ap Richard, ap Edward, ap Humphrey, ap Edward, ap Dafydd, ap Robert, ap Howel, ap Dafydd, ap Meirig Llwyd o Nannau, ap Meirig Vychan, ap Ynyr Vychan, ap Ynyr, ap Meuric, ap Madog, ap Cadwgan, ap Blyddyn, ap Cynvyn, Prince of North Wales and Powys.

Having passed this mansion, we ascended on the other side, till we came to a deep mountain hollow, called Bwlch Tyddyad. Here the rocks close, and oppose a collection of shattered precipices, forming a scene of desolation and barrenness throughout. A few grasses, liverwort, and heath, constitute all the vegetation of this place. We wandered on this rocky cleft, for such it only seemed, till
we

we got beyond the higher mountains, when on a sudden, a fine open prospect of all the country eastward was extended before us. Here we were treated with a pastoral landscape, bounded by high distant mountains, which formed a majestic barrier around: amongst these, Cader Idris, and the two Arrennigs were particularly conspicuous.

From hence we made a sharp turn to the right, still continuing our journey over a wretched horse-path, and soon afterwards, turning again to the right, we entered another deep glen, called Drws Ardudwy, *the pass of the overflowed land*, a place well calculated to inspire the timid mind with horror. The sides and bottom were almost covered over with loose fragments of stone, once detached by the force of frost, or the irresistible rushing of torrents, after storms and heavy rain, from the heights above. The fear for personal safety must sometimes, in places similar to this,

this, be accompanied with a tremor, for the mind is not always able to divest itself of prejudices and disagreeable associations of ideas, and in spite of every effort of reason and judgment, the unpleasing sensations of terror will sometimes affect us.

After this dreary scene, we entered a more wide and fertile valley, called Cwm Nancoll, *the hollow of the sunken brook*, from whence the guide took me, though somewhat out of the usual track, to see a Cromlech, in a farm, called Gwern Einion, *Einion's alder-grove*. This is about two miles south of Harlech; it is at present made to form the corner of a wall, and is built upon two sides, with modern stones, to prevent the sheep from getting through it. There are six supporters, three about six feet, and the other three about four feet in height. The stone which rests upon these, is large, flat, and slanting.

A little

A little while before we came to this cromlech, I heard, from the side of the hill, on which we were walking, the falling of water, in a wood, on the other side of the valley, and apparently about half a mile from us; and I could, though the distance was so great, plainly perceive a silver line amongst the trees, formed by the waters rushing down a precipice. I enquired of the guide respecting it, and he informed me, that it was a fall of no great height, or beauty, and he was not acquainted with it's name, if it had any. My walk of this day had been very long and laborious, and I was almost fainting from want of refreshment, so that I was under the necessity of taking his word for it, otherwise I should have crossed the vale to examine it, for I am much inclined to suppose, that it must have been a cataract of very considerable height.

Betwixt

Betwixt the cromlech and the town of Harlech, I passed another Druidical circle, somewhat smaller than the one I have before mentioned, but surrounded, like that, with another distant circle.

It being the ebb of the tide, as we returned, the guide pointed out to me part of a long stone wall, which runs out from Mochras, a point of land a few miles south of Harlech, in a direction west-south-west, for above twelve miles. This is called Sarn Bad-rwyg, *the ship-breaking causeway*. West of Harlech there was formerly another habitable hundred belonging to Merionethshire, called Cantre'r Gwaelod, *the lowland hundred*, on the edge of which, this great stone-wall was built, as a fence against the sea. But about the year 500, when Gwyddno Garan Hîr was lord of it, one of the persons who looked after the dams, was so careless as to let the sea break through them, and ever since that time,

time, it has been always completely flooded.* Thus Cardigan Bay, though to appearance very safe for a ship to ride in, is for many miles so full of shoals, that it is extremely dangerous for a vessel of any burthen to venture at all near the coast.

CHAP. XX.

FROM HARLECH, BY BARMOUTH, TO DOLGELLE.
 —MEINI GWYR—CROMLECHS CORN-Y-GEDOL
 BARMOUTH—INN—RIVER MAWDDACH—FRIAR'S
 ISLAND—DINAS GORTIN—BEACH—FINE SCENE-
 RY—LLANELLYD—DOLGELLE—DR. FULLER'S
 ENIGMATICAL DESCRIPTION—MANUFACTORIES
 —INN—BATTLE IN THE CIVIL WARS.

THE road from Harlech to Barmouth is even and good, but, by it's lying over a flat and disagreeable country, is,

* Vaughan's Sketch of the History of Merionethshire, in Camb. Reg. I. 188.

beyond

beyond measure, dull and uninteresting. At a distance, towards the sea, I had nothing but turfy bogs and salt marshes; and on the other side, the mountains were low and stony, and completely barren in picturesque beauty.

In a field by the road side, near Llanbedir, I observed two upright stones standing near each other, the one about ten, and the other six feet in height. They were without inscriptions, and were probably what the British called *Meini Gwyr*, the stones of the heroes, having been erected as funeral monuments to some of their antient defiled warriors who were slain in battle.

A few hundred yards beyond the fifth mile stone, and at a little distance on the left of the road, were two cromlechs very near each other, placed on barrows, or
heaps

heaps of loose stones,* the supposed interments of some men of antient note, the largest twelve feet long, nine broad, and the quoit or upper stone, about twenty inches thick. I was told that this part of Merionethshire abounded in different species of Druidical antiquity.

I passed

* Though these barrows, on account of the cromlechs erected on them, have every appearance of high antiquity, yet I am inclined to suppose, with Mr. Wyndham, a judicious traveller through this country in 1774, that many of the heaps of stones, usually taken for barrows or cairns, "were originally piled together for no other reason than that the rest of the field might afford the clearer pasture." See *Tour through Monmouthshire and Wales*, by Henry Penruddocke Wyndham, Esq. The mode of forming these antient barrows or *Carneddau*, as they are called by the Welsh, was somewhat curious. When the *carnedd* was considered as the honourable tomb of a warrior, every passer by threw an additional stone out of reverence

I passed Cors-y-gedol, the antient family seat of the Vaughan's, but now the property of Sir Thomas Mostyn, Bart. and continuing my journey by Llanaber, the parish church to Barmouth, I soon afterwards arrived at that place.

Barmouth is placed in one of the most disagreeable situations that could possibly have been chosen for it, near the conflux of the river Maw, or Mawddach, whence it is called by the Welsh, Aber Maw, and from this Berthaw, or, corruptedly, Barmouth. Some of the houses are built amongst the sand at the bottom, and others at different heights, up the side of a huge rock, which entirely protects the town on the east. Their situations are so singular,

to his memory; but when this heap came to be disgraced by being the mark where the guilty was laid, the custom of every one who passed by, to fling his stone, was still continued; but now only as a token of detestation.

that

that it is really curious for a stranger to wind up along the narrow paths amongst the houses, where, on one side, he may, if he please, enter the door of a dwelling, or on the other, look down the chimney of the neighbourhood in front. The lower part of the town is almost choaked up with sand, which fills every passage, and in wet weather, it is extremely dirty and unpleasant. The houses are the most irregular possible—in short, it appears to be such a place as nothing but the pleasures of society can render at all comfortable.

It is frequented during the summer season by many genteel families from Wales, and the west of England, as a sea bathing place. Mr. Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt, in his Sketch of the History of Merionethshire,* seems to ascribe it's origin to persons frequenting the banks of the Mawd-

* Camb. Register, I. 190.

dach, "by reason of the herb scurvy-grass, which grows there in great abundance."

The company must find it an uncomfortable place, for the inn (the Cors-y-gedol Arms) is at times, almost buried in sand, and a person cannot walk many yards from the door without being up to the ankles in it. Added to this, a strong westerly wind blowing it against the windows and into all the rooms, must render it horridly unpleasant, and were it not for the civility of the hospitable Mrs. Lewis, the place would fail in one of its chief attractions.

I was beyond measure surprized upon being introduced into the dining room, to find upwards of thirty persons, most of them of fortune and fashion, in so secluded a corner of the kingdom. I found too upon enquiry, that this was by no means all the company at that time in the town, for another large and good building, which

Mrs.

Mrs. Lewis had in her own hands as a lodging house, was also quite full. To be again introduced, as it were into the world, after my solitary rambles amongst the wilds of this country, made a most pleasing variety in my tour; and I enjoyed very much the cheerfulness and affability of every one present.

The lodging houses in the town, are many of them dirty and miserable places. There are at Barmouth, three bathing machines, but these are entirely appropriated to the use of the ladies, the gentlemen bathing on the open coast. The amusements seem to consist in going out in parties on the water, or in lounging on the sands or beach. The latter is one of the most delightful walks I ever beheld. The wide river Mawddach winds amongst the mountains, forming many and elegant promontories; these rise to great heights on each side, some clad with wood, and

others exhibiting their naked rocks scanty covered with the purple heath. The summit of the lofty Cader Idris is seen to rise high above the other mountains in the back ground. Had the town been built here, scarcely half a mile from it's present situation, instead of one of the most unpleasant, it might have been made one of the most agreeable retirements in the kingdom.

Within the last three years, the number of visitors to this place has been much increased, which I can attribute to no other cause but the civility of the good hostess. She makes it her study to please every one, and she is so fortunate as seldom to fail.

Barmouth is the port of Merionethshire ; but Mr. Pennant * says, it is not so much frequented as it ought to be, on account of the inhabitants (who do not attempt

* Tour in Wales, II. 114.

commerce

commerce on a large scale) vending their manufactures through the means of factors, who run away with many of the advantages which the natives might enjoy; yet this gentleman was informed, that a few years prior to the publication of his tour,* forty thousand pounds-worth of flannels, and ten thousand pounds-worth of stockings, had been exported from hence in the course of a year. The number of ships at present belonging to this port, is about a hundred. The population of the place is estimated at sixteen hundred.

Not far from Barmouth, the river Mawddach divides into two arms, and forms a small island, called Ynys y Brawd, or *the Friar's Island*. On the top of the rock, called Dinas Gortin, was formerly a military trench or fence.†

* In the year 1781.

† Vaughan's Sketch of the History of Merionethshire, Camb. Reg. I. 190.

I left Barmouth, and proceeded along the bank of the Mawddach, usually called Avon Vawr, *the great river*, towards Dolgelle. It was now high water, and the whole bed of the river being filled, made the different landscapes the scene afforded truly picturesque. The first two miles, which lay along what the inhabitants of Barmouth call the beach, formed by much the most interesting part of the journey. In the composition of the views, scarcely any thing appeared wanting: here was every requisite of mountain and vale, wood, water, meadows, and rocks, arranged in beautiful order. The numerous heaps of peat spread along the green bottom, were certainly unpleasant objects in the scene, but these were easily overlooked, when every thing else was so beautiful. Beyond the beach the road winds at a little distance from the river, amongst the low mountains, from different places in which I frequently
got

got a view of the river, partly hidden by intervening mountains, which made it assume the appearance of elegant and picturesque lakes. And in this manner, for eight or nine miles, was I alternately entertained with scenes of dreary and picturesque landscape.

About two miles from Dolgelle is Llanelltyd, a neat and clean looking village, from whence there is a road which winds along a dark and gloomy vale, towards Tan-y-bwlch. From the bridge, this vale had indeed a grand appearance. Not far from hence a foot-path leads over the meadows to an antient monastic ruin, called Y Vaner Abbey, which I visited in my next ramble from Dolgelle to the waterfalls.

Many prefer making the journey from Barmouth to Dolgelle by water, which must form a most charming excursion. To sit at ease and enjoy the pleasures afforded by the picturesque scenes, along the Mawd-

dach, must be extremely gratifying to an admirer of nature. The river, however, is diminished so much in width and depth within the last mile, as not to admit even of a pleasure boat coming up to Dolgelle, and the company are on that account, obliged to land about three quarters of a mile from the place, and walk up to the town.

Dolgelle, *the holme of the groves*, is a market town of some consequence, seated in a wide and fertile vale, between the rivers Arran and Mawddach, and surrounded on all sides with high, and in many parts wooded mountains. The streets are irregular, and the houses in general ill built. The church is a neat structure, having in it an antient monument of Meiric Vychan ap Ynyr Vychan, an ancestor of the present family of the Vaughans of Nanney, near Dolgelle.

Dr.

Dr. Fuller,* in his Worthies of Merionethshire, published rather more than a century ago, speaking of Dolgelle, has given us the following singular and enigmatical account of the place :

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. " The walls thereof
are three miles high.2. Men go into it <i>over</i>
<i>the water</i> ; but,3. Go out of it <i>under the</i>
<i>water</i>.4. The steeple thereof
doth grow therein.5. There are more ale-
houses than houses. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The mountains which
surround it.2. On a fair bridge.3. Falling from a rock,
and conveyed in a
wooden trough, (un-
der which travellers
must make shift to
pass) to turn an over-
shot mill.4. The bells (if plural)
hang in a yew tree.5. Tenements are di-
vided into two or
more <i>tipling houses</i> :
and chimney - less
barns are used for
that purpose." |
|--|--|

* Fuller's Worthies of Wales, p. 43.

The

The three last of these remarks will not hold good in the present day, as the alterations that have taken place in this town since the Doctor's time, are very considerable.

Here are considerable manufactories of Welsh flannels, which, from the number of hands necessarily employed, makes the town very populous.* The market for their goods is chiefly at Shrewsbury; but of late years so much has been bought upon the spot, that they have had occasion to send very little to a market at so great a distance.

The Golden Lion, called *Plas ifa, the lower house*, is the best inn the town affords, but I cannot say much in favour of it. The provisions were not much amiss, except the wine, which was bad, and the beds were intolerable.

* The population is estimated at about 2000.

In the civil wars of the last century, about a hundred of the king's troops were attempting to raise a fortification about this place, to defend it against the Parliament's forces, when Mr. Edward Vaughan, at the head of a small party, attacked and routed them, taking their captain and eighteen others prisoners.*

The celebrated Merionethshire mountain, Cader Idris, rises at a little distance, south-west of Dolgelle, and its summit is about six miles from thence. As guides can be at times procured here, most persons choose to ascend it from this place. Such was my intention, but I was completely prevented by wet and unpleasant weather.

* Whitelock's Memorials, p. 190.

CHAP. XXI.

EXCURSION FROM DOLGELLE TO THE WATER-FALLS.—Y VANER, OR KEMMER ABBEY—CASTELL CYMMER—RHAIDR DŪ—DISTANT FALL—RHAIDR Y MAWDDACH—PISTYLL Y CAIN.

THE three cataracts, on account of which Dolgelle is chiefly visited by the tourist, are Rhaiadr dŷ, *the black cataract*; Rhaiadr y Mawddach, *the fall of the river Mawddach*; and Pistyll y Cain, *the fall of the Cain*. The former of these is about five, and the other two about eight miles from Dolgelle, and all of them near the high road leading towards Tan-y-bwlch.

I set out on this expedition, but left the road, and went along a foot path to the right, a few hundred yards before I reached the bridge at Llanelltid. I wandered about a quarter of a mile across the meadows,

meadows, when I came to an avenue of aged fycamores, which led me to the remains of an abbey, not visible from the road, called by the Welsh, Y Vaner, and by Tanner, Kemmer Abbey,*

Where pious beadsmen, from the world retir'd,
In blissful visions wing'd their souls to heav'n,
While future joys their nobler transports fir'd,
They wept their erring days, and were forgiv'n.

Part of the church of this monastery is yet left, and the refectory and abbot's lodgings are built into the adjoining farm house. The other parts are much shattered, and the walls in many places patched with modern work to render it of use to the farmer, in whose ground it stands. The length is very disproportionate for the width, being betwixt thirty and forty

* It is called besides by different authors, Cymmer, Cymner, Cwmner, Kinner, Kinmer, and Kymmer.

yards

yards long, and not above eight broad. The east end is the most perfect, and through it's thick covering of ivy, I could observe three small lancet windows. Against the south wall are a few small Gothic pillars and arches, and an aperture in the wall in which was probably kept the holy water ; in this part of the building there has also been a semi-circular door opposite to two small arches, and near them a mutilated stone representing the head of a human figure. The space of ground which these walls inclose is very inconsiderable, and from the great plainness of the building altogether, it will not form a picture from any point of view whatever. From a large sycamore, which I observed growing amongst the ruins at the west end, I should judge that the building had long been in a most ruinous state. Though it is but little more than a mile distant, it is, from the obscurity of it's situation, scarcely known

known in Dolgelle. I enquired for it in vain as Kemmer Abbey, for the only name it has there is Y Vaner.

It was founded, according to Mr. Robert Vaughan,* in the year 1198, by Meredith and Griffith, Lords of Merioneth, and sons of Conan ap Owen Gwynedd, Prince

* Sketch of the history of Merionethshire, Camb. Reg. I. 190. Tanner, the authority of Speed says, that it was founded about 1200, by Llewelyn, son of Gervase (Jorwerth); but a note adds, that "though he seems to have been a benefactor, and as "Prince of North Wales, to have confirmed the "donations of others as well as his own, there "doth not appear any great reason to think him "founder, nor is the time of the foundation clear; "but it seems to have been in a flourishing condition in 1231, when in the wars of Henry III. "with the Welsh, the English would have burnt "it, but the latter gave them three hundred marks "to spare it. This Llewelyn became Prince of "North Wales 1195, and died in 1240." Not. Monast.

of

of North Wales. The monks were of the Cistercian order, and the abbey was dedicated to St. Mary. Mr. Lewis Morris, a man well acquainted with the history and antiquities of his country, says "it was first founded by some monks, who sojourned there (as Mr. Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt expresses it in his Remarks on Sir William Dugdale's Monasticon) from Cwm hir Abbey, in Radnorshire. It seems," continueth he, "it was a colony of monks they sent away, as bees do when the hive is too full."*

* Letter of Mr. Lewis Morris to his brother Mr. William Morris, of the Custom House, Holyhead, Anglesea, in Camb. Reg. II. 493. This seems in some measure, to account for Dugdale's mistake in confounding this abbey with that of Combehire, or Cwm hir, in Radnorshire, to which indeed the Parcolude Annals make it a daughter abbey. See Tanner's Not. Monastica, and Dugdale's Monasticon Angl.

In

In 1231 when Henry III. was marching against the Welsh, who just before, headed by their Prince Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, had risen and attacked the castle of Montgomery, one of the monks of this house happened to be near, and was questioned as to the situation and force of the Welsh army. He determined to befriend his country rather than assist an enemy, and therefore deceived them so much in the account he gave, as to induce them to make an immediate attack. The Welsh feigned a retreat to a neighbouring marsh, into which the English, who with the incumbrances of their armour were not so agile as their neighbours, immediately plunged after them, but to their destruction, for the Welsh forces returning upon them, after a short conflict came off victorious. This action so enraged the king, that passing shortly afterwards near the abbey, he burned down the out-offices,

and ordered the whole building to be destroyed. The abbot only saved it by his entreaties to the king, and paying him down three hundred marks as some recompence for the injuries that had been done to him.* At the dissolution the revenues were valued, according to Speed, at £58. 15s. 4d. and according to Dugdale, at £51. 13s. 4d.†

The

* Powel's History of Wales, p. 287. Matt. Paris, p. 311.

† Tanner's Notitia Monastica. It appears, from the accounts in the Augmentation Office, that from the 31. of Henry VIII. " the site of the monastery, " with lands, tenements, and mills, at the rent " of £2. 15s. 4d. The rectory of Llanelltid at " £5. 13s. 4d. The rectory of Llanycryn at £13. " 13s. 4d. The rectory of Llanycrith at £6. 18. 4d. " and twenty-four crannocks,|| and two hoppetts " of wheat, £10. 6s. 6d. were all then upon lease " to John Pewes. The other possessions there

|| A crannock was an ancient measure of corn.

" described

The site remained in the crown for several successive reigns, not being granted away till Queen Elizabeth bestowed it upon Robert, Earl of Leicester, about the

“ described as lately being parcel of the abbey, were
“ the

	£.	s.	d.
“ Town of Redcrowe, lands and			
“ tenements.....	3	5	4
“ Town of Llanelltid, divers te-			
“ nements, &c.....	10	15	2
“ Town of Dolgelle, divers tene-			
“ ments, &c.....	2	8	4
“ Town of Cumkadein, tene-			
“ ments and mill.....	3	2	0
“ Town of Transbryn, divers te-			
“ nements.....	5	0	0
“ Town of Llanechethe, tene-			
“ ments and rents.....	2	18	0
“ Chapel of Kydis.....	0	10	0
“ Fines and perquisites of courts	0	10	0
“ So that the whole sum of the yearly income of			
“ the crown, in right of the abbey, was then			
“ £65. 15s. 10d. See Camb. Reg. II. 284, 285.			

twentieth year of her reign. How it has since descended is not known.*

On a bank, not far from this monastery, stood Castell Cymmer, *the castle of the conflux*, built by Uchdrut ap Edwin. This castle was demolished upon some disagreement with the founder, by the sons of Cadwgan ap Bleddyn, about the year 1113, not long after it's erection.†

Returning from the abbey, I crossed the bridge at Llanelltid, and went on the vale leading towards Tan-y-bwlch. The first waterfall I came to, was Rhaiadr dû, *the black cataract*, this is in the grounds of William Maddocks, Esq. at Dol-y-Melynlyn, *the bolme of the yellow pool*, and from this circumstance, it is called also the

* Cambrian Register, II. 285.

† Powel's History of Wales, p. 183. Vaughan's Sketch of the History of Merionethshire, Camb. Reg. I. 190.

Dol-y-Melynlyn fall. It is a double fall, about sixty feet high, and the water foams with a thundering noise amongst the black rocks down which it is thrown. These rocks give to the scene a singular appearance, from their being in many places covered with a pure white lichen. The trees on one side of the stream had been lately cut down, but the lively and varied green of those on the other, formed an elegant contrast to the almost jet black rocks with which they were intermixed. The torrent rolls into a small deep basin, from whence it dashes itself along its ragged channel. Mr. Maddocks has been at the expence of making a very good foot-path, both to the bottom and upper part of this fall, giving to the traveller, every possible means of seeing it to advantage.

About a mile farther I turned to the right, to see the other two which are situated within a few hundred yards of each

other. The path lays along some woods and meadows, not very amusing. From the side of a hill, about half a mile from the fall, I could observe the river Mawddach rolling down a steep in a woody vale above, and its hoarse murmuring just reached my ear. Beyond it, at some distance, was a rude arch, which crossed the glen, and from my present station, gave a pleasing and romantic cast to the scene.

Descending now (but cautious lest too fast),
A sudden steep upon a rustic bridge,
We pass a gulph in which the hazels dip
Their pendent boughs——

This was a truly alpine bridge over the river Cain, formed by the rude trunk of an oak which hung frightfully over the black torrent, that roared amongst the rocks many feet beneath. Having passed this I soon found myself at the foot of Rhaiadr y Mawddach, *the cataract of the river Mawddach*. This stream here forces
itself

itself down a rock betwixt fifty and sixty feet in height, whose strata laying in parallel lines several degrees inclined from the horizon, give the scene a singular and crooked appearance. The stream is thrice broken in it's fall, and the bason into which is precipitated, is very large. In the bason are some fine trout, which an heron seemed to be anxiously watching till I aroused him from his attention. The rocks and trees form an amphitheatre around, and the foreground was finely broken by the large pieces of rock, once, no doubt, loosened from above. The upper part of the fall was hidden by intervening rocks, but upon crossing the stream, it came into view. The scene was now complete and certainly picturesque.

Pistyll* y Cain, *the spout of the Cain*, I found by far the highest and most magni-

* The word *Pistyll* in the British language, signifies a narrow stream of water, something like that issuing through a spout.

ficent cataract of the three. A narrow stream rushes down a vast rock at least a hundred and fifty feet high, whose horizontal strata here run in irregular steps through it's whole breadth, and form a mural front. These indeed are so regular, as in a great measure to spoil it's picturesque beauty, unless hidden by a volume of water much greater than there was at the time I saw it. Immense fragments of broken rock scattered around in every different direction at the foot of the fall, communicate a pleasing effect. And the agreeable mixture of tints of the dark oak and birch, with the yellower and fading elm, formed on the whole a scene highly gratifying.

The guide who accompanied me, was an Englishman, who had resided only a few years in Wales. He seemed ignorant of the language, which prevented him from giving me so much information as I wished.

wished. His name was Samuel Bartlet; he keeps a small public house near Dol-y-Melynlyn.

CHAP. XXII.

FROM DOLGELLE TO MACHYNLLETH.—LLYN TRIGRAIENWYN—STORY OF GIANT IDRIS—BLUE LION—CADER IDRIS—CATARACTS—LLYN Y CAE—CRAIG Y CAE—PHENOMENON—VIEW FROM CADER IDRIS—CASCADE—CORACLES—MACHYNLLETH—WATERFALL—DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE IN CARDIGANSHIRE.

THE town of Dolgelle is seen to the greatest advantage from the Machynlleth road, at the distance of about two miles. From hence I beheld it in the midst of a vale replete with pastoral beauty. The wide river Mawddach in the distance, reflected it's silvery whiteness amidst the high and dreary mountains. The intervening space was varied with every luxuriance

uriancy of woods, meadows, and corn fields, intersected by the river Wnion which serpentizes along the vale.

The road soon afterwards, passing over high and wet moors, became dreary and irksome, the lofty Cader Idris on the right, it's summit now obscured in clouds, remaining the sole source of amusement. I arrived at Llyn trigrafenyn, *the pool of the three grains*, so denominated from three huge fragments of rock lying at the east end of it. The largest is about eight yards long, six broad, and four high; and the traditions of the peasantry say, that they were three pebbles which by chance had found their way into one of the shoes of the great giant Idris, and being somewhat uneasy to his foot, he took it off and threw them out at this place, where they have ever since remained. It is also believed amongst them that the pool is bottomless; but though this is not the case, it is somewhat

what surprising that so small a place should be, as I was told, upwards of fifty fathom deep. Near this pool the prospect began to mend, and entering a long straight hollow, Llyn Mwyngil, *the lake of the pleasant retreat*, came in with distant hills to close the vale.

I stopped at the Blue Lion, a small public house, a little beyond the pool of the three grains, and enquiring what they could give me to dinner, I found, as Dr. Johnson* did at Glenelg, in the Highlands of Scotland, that, "of the provisions, the "negative catalogue was very copious." Here was no meat (except bad bacon), no eggs, no wine, no spirits. I, however, obliged by necessity, contented myself with what they could give me, bread and butter, and new ale, taken, from every appearance,

* See his Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland.

from

from the tub in which it was fermenting. I have had occasion to remark throughout the whole of my tour, that this occurs but too frequently at most of the small inns in Wales, and the labouring people do not seem to care about drinking it in this state; if it has but the name of *Cuorw*, it seems quite sufficient.

Edward Jones, the man who lives at this house, in the winter teaches a small school, and during the summer season performs the office of guide from hence to the summit of Cader Idris. He is a most talkative man, and is certainly esteemed a very great *scholar*. I smiled several times at his attempts to show off his learning and abilities, and in so obscure a situation I really thought these excusable. This house being situated by the road side, immediately beneath Cader Idris, is a very convenient place for travellers coming from Machynlleth to Dolgelle, to ascend that
mountain

mountain from. They may, if it is not inconvenient, on account of carriages or horses, even go over the summit of the mountain and down the other way to Dolgelle, in nearly as short a space of time as it would require to descend again to this place.

At the time I came here it rained most violently, but bad as the house was, I determined to remain all night, in hopes that the morning might be clearer, and permit me to go up the mountain. The bed I slept in was not a very bad one, nor was I here, though in a smaller house, so pestered with fleas as I had before been at Beddgelert.

The morning proving finer, I determined to venture up Cader Idris, and take the chance of the weather entirely clearing by the time I got to the top. Therefore having provided ourselves with such things as the house afforded, bread, cheese, and ale,

ale, we set out upon our expedition at nine o'clock.

This mountain is called Cader Idris, from the tradition of it's having been a fortress belonging to Idris, who is supposed to have been a prince of those parts in very antient times. There is also a tradition that this Idris was a great poet, astronomer, and philosopher, and that the summit of Cader Idris was his favourite seat and observatory, and from thence called *Cadair Idris*, the seat of Idris.* It appears to me that from their antient date and small authority, there may be just as much truth in the one as in the other of these stories, and such being the case, I will leave it to deeper antiquaries to decide upon their merits.

* He is sometimes called *Cawr Idris*, or King Idris, *Cawr* being an old British word for king.

Since

Since there had been so much rain, the guide took me along the side of a rivulet which runs from Llyn y Cae, a pool in one of the hollows above, down the side of the mountain, to see a small cataract, formed by it's falling down the face of a steep rock. The torrent now swelled by the late rains, foamed along it's channel, and came down in a white and thrice broken sheet. This was altogether very small but extremely pretty.

A little above this, I saw another cascade on the same stream, smaller and more contracted than the last. The water was here a little broken towards the top, but it was from thence carried down an almost perpendicular rock about eight yards in height. This little cataract would have appeared but trifling, had it not been ornamented by three large oaks, whose branches, whilst they almost hide the stream, add greatly to the beauty of the picture.

I now

I now crossed this mountain rivulet, and went along the side of it for a little way, entertained in many places by the little cascades formed in its descent, amongst the abrupt rocks which lay in its course. Leaving it, I after awhile came to a hollow, in whose bottom are the dismal waters of Llyn y Cae, *the inclosed pool*,* from the west side of which rises an immense black and precipitous rock, called Craig y Cae, that casts a gloomy shade on every thing below it. Its sullen and majestic front was only enlivened with patches of

* Mr. Arthur Aikin, in his Tour through North Wales, p. 62, says, "some travellers have mentioned the finding of lava and other volcanic productions here; upon a strict examination, however, we were unable to discover any thing of the kind, nor did the water of the lake appear to differ in any respect from the purest rock water, though it was tried repeatedly with the most delicate tests."

the

the moss saxifrage, and a few goats of pure white, that were seen skipping carelessly along its dangerous steeps. From its spiry points and deep precipices, it has assumed an appearance not much unlike the age-worn-front of some antient cathedral. The whole of the scene, from near the edge of the pool, is truly picturesque and grand, and from some station not far distant, Wilson's admirable view of Cader Idris was taken.

Whilst I was gazing at the rock, a smart shower of rain came on, and after it was over, I was entertained with a phenomenon, novel to me, but not uncommon amongst the mountains. The clouds were on a sudden whirled around the top, and apparently confined within the hollow; the motion was continued for some time, and then remaining still for a while, they were again sent round with considerable velocity. I can only account for this, by supposing

them so dense, that resting below the upper edge, the wind in passing over, gave them this rotatory motion.

The clouds now rose above the mountains, and the highest peak of Cader Idris was alone clouded. I ascended by Bwlch y Cae to this summit, which is called Pen y Cader, *the head of the fort*; this, like that of Snowdon, is conical, and covered for some distance with small loose stones. I continued here enveloped in mist for more than half an hour, when the mountain became perfectly cleared for about ten minutes. I had from hence a view, if not more extensive, yet if any thing, more varied, than that from Snowdon. On one side of me I observed, that the mountain was broken into an abrupt and deep precipice, at whose bottom was lodged a small lake or two. The distant views were of Bala pool, and its adjacent mountains, which appeared quite near, and beyond it
the

the long range of Ferwyn mountains, headed by Cader Ferwyn, were seen to extend in rugged files. Towards the south I had the county of Montgomery; and Plinlimmon, that celebrated mountain, was very visible. On the west was the whole curve of Cardigan Bay, from St. David's quite round to Caernarvonshire. I had scarcely looked round, when the gathering clouds swept over me in deeper folds, and all was again hidden from my sight.

Cader Idris has three high points, the most lofty called Pen y Cader; the next in height Mynydd Moel; and the third, Craig y Cae. The ascent is much easier than up Snowdon; and I am confident, that from Edward Jones's house, I could walk to the summit in about two hours. Of the height of the mountain, I was able to learn nothing more than what Mr. Pennant has given * us. He says, that "Pen

* Pennant's Tour in Wales, II. 99.

“ y Cader is nine hundred and fifty yards
“ higher than the green near Dolgelle;
“ Aranvowddwy, seven hundred and forty
“ above Llyn Tegid; and the Arrenig
“ only twenty yards short of the Aran;
“ that the fall from the lake to Dolgelle
“ green, is one hundred and eighty yards;
“ so that the real difference of height be-
“ tween Cader and the Aran, is only
“ thirty yards.”

In order to vary my walk as much as possible, I took a different way down, by going more eastward, and descending along that part of the mountain, called Mynydd Moel. The path in this direction was sufficiently sloping all the way, to permit a person to ride quite up to the summit. A gentleman mounted on a little Welsh pony, had done it but a few days before I was there.

About half a mile from E. Jones's cottage, at the bottom of a hill, on the right
of

of the road to Machynlleth, I saw another cataract, which, though very small, was not destitute of beauty. The rock down which the water falls, is about eight yards high, and being five or six times as wide at the top as at the bottom, it gives to the scene a singular effect. After dry weather I should suppose this fall would almost always be in want of water; I, however, was lucky enough to see it in perfection, after some heavy showers of rain.

The road from hence to Machynlleth, was very even and good; but laying in a narrow hollow, between a series of wooded mountains, without much variety of character, even this short journey was rendered tiresome, and the more so since I had rain nearly all the way. The murmuring of the rivulet, which accompanied me for several miles, and here and there a picturesque cottage seated in the woods, were my only amusements, till I came

within two miles of Machynlleth, when in the evening, the weather became quite clear, and I entered the fine vale in which the town stands. I did not come in sight of the place till I was within a mile of it; for being seated in a vale, and hidden by intervening mountains, it only became visible on a sudden turn in the road just before I got to the river.

I observed in the Dovey, two of the boats, called Coracles; these are used chiefly in fishing; they are five or six feet long, and three or four broad, of an oval shape, and so light that one man may with ease carry them on his shoulders. They were the *vitilia navigia* of Pliny, and were much in use amongst the antient Britons. Their name was taken from their being formerly covered with *coria*, or hides. Camden * says, "they were made of split fallow

* Camden's Britannia.

" twigs,

“twigs, interwoven, (round at the bottom), and on that part next the water, “covered with a horse’s hide;” but they are now usually covered with pitched canvas. They hold only a single person, who can row himself with incredible swiftness with a paddle in his right-hand, whilst with the other he can manage a net.

I crossed the Dovey into Montgomeryshire,* and shortly afterwards arrived at Machynlleth,† a neater and much more regularly built town than most in Wales. The town-hall is a plain building, and the church has a fault, common with many of the Welsh churches, in being white-

* This country contains about 450,000 acres of land, and 28,000 inhabitants. It is divided into seven cantreds or hundreds, and contains 47 parishes. It has seven market towns, and is about 30 miles from east to west, and the same from north to south.

† Machynlleth signifies *the place near the river Cynllaeth*, which was the antient name for the Dovey.

washed. From the church-yard is a pretty view up a green and meadowy vale. Machynlleth is a place of some trade, and I fancied it had the aspect of being more opulent than most of the towns in this part of the principality.

I was shewn an old building, now converted into stables, constructed of the thin flaty stone, with which this country abounds, where it is said that Owen Glyndwr summoned the nobility and gentry of Wales in the year 1402, when he was acknowledged as their prince, and as such proclaimed and crowned accordingly.*

Machynlleth was not improbably the *Maglona* of the Romans, their principal station in Montgomeryshire; where, in the reign of the Emperor Honorius, the band of Solenses were stationed in garrison,

* Wynne's History of Wales, p. 321. Carte's History of England, II. 655.

to act as a check upon the mountaineers.* Near Penallt, about two miles distant, is Cefyn Caer, *the ridge of the city*, where Roman coins have been frequently found, and where there has been formerly a circular fortification of some extent.†

From the top of a high rock, which overlooks the town, I had a most extensive view of all the places around me. It was a kind of prospect that reminded me very strongly of that shewn to Moses from the top of Pisgah. “ And Moses went up
“ from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that
“ is over against Jericho: and the Lord
“ shewed him all the land of Gilead unto
“ Dan. And all Naphtali, and the land
“ of Ephraim, and Manasseth; and all

* Camden's Britannia.

† Vaughan's Sketch of the History of Merionethshire in the Cambrian Register, I. 189.

“ the

“ the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea.
“ And the south, and the plain of the
“ valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees,
“ unto Zoar.”

When I was just on the point of setting off for Llanydloes, I was informed of a very lofty cataract, about six miles south of the town, near a pool called Llyn Pen Rhaiadr, *the pool at the head of the cataract*. But as the road lay quite over the mountains, and I was anxious to reach Llanydloes, I left it unseen.

Had I not, that I might see the more of North Wales, made a determinate resolution not to enter the southern division of the principality, I would have gone from hence to Aberystwyth, *the conflux of the Iſtwith*,* distant about nineteen miles. This.

* The sepulchre of Talieſſin, the Prince of the British bards, is supposed to have been near the highway, about four miles from Aberystwyth; but this, if such was ever there, has been long destroyed.

is now a celebrated watering place, frequented by much company. Here are the ruins of a castle, built about the year 1107, by Gilbert Strongbow, and about two centuries afterwards, rebuilt by Edward I. From hence my route would have been to an inn about twelve miles off, called the Havod Arms, not far from which is the celebrated bridge, called Pont-ar-Monach, *a bridge over the Monach*, and by the English, the Devil's bridge. And from thence I should have returned into North Wales, near Llanydloes. Were I ever to make this part of the tour again, I certainly should take this route; and instead of the twenty miles disagreeable road betwixt Machynlleth and Llanydloes, go this round of about fifty, visiting in it those two interesting places, and seeing much beautiful and elegant scenery.

As it may be of some use to the traveller through this country, I will present him
with

with a short description of the Devil's bridge, and the deep glen where it is situated, extracted from an entertaining journey through North Wales, by Mr. Arthur Aiken,* as the only account I dared to rely upon for accuracy. “ After a long
“ and rather tedious walk (from Aber-
“ ystwyth), we came suddenly to a most
“ singularly striking spot. The valley of
“ the Rhydol contracts into a deep glen,
“ the rocky banks of which are clothed
“ with plantations, and at the bottom runs
“ a rapid torrent. This leads soon to the
“ spot that we were in search of, which is
“ full of horrid sublimity. It is formed
“ by a deep dark chasm or cleft, between
“ two rocks, which just receives light
“ enough to discover at the bottom, through

* Journal of a Tour through North Wales and part of Shropshire, by Arthur Aikin, crown 8vo. Lond. 1797.

“ the tangled thickets and impetuous tor-
“ rent, which is soon lost under a lofty
“ bridge. By descending an hundred feet,
“ we had a clearer view of this romantic
“ scene, just above our heads was a double
“ bridge, which has been thrown over the
“ gulph; the inferior bridge was built by
“ a monastery,* and hence called Pont-ar-
“ Monach; this growing to decay, and
“ being thought infecure, another arch
“ was thrown directly above, and resting
“ on the antient one, and which now sup-
“ ports a good road across the precipice.
“ The water below has scooped out several
“ deep chasms in the rock, through which
“ it flows before it dives under the bridge.
“ A large beech has flung it's boughs ho-
“ rizontally over the torrent, as if to hide
“ it from the spectator; and the whole

* Probably that of Strata Florida, which was not far from hence.

“ banks

“ banks of this wild spot are rough with
“ fern, moss, and native thickets, except
“ on one side, where a perpendicular
“ naked slate rock lets in the light to the
“ inmost recesses. Having sufficiently ad-
“ mired this tremendous scene, we walked
“ along the cliffs overhanging the deep
“ glen, which receives the mingled waters
“ of the Rhydol and Monach, whose lux-
“ uriant woods almost concealed the nu-
“ merous rapids and falls occasioned by
“ the ruggedness of it's rocky bottom.
“ After a troublesome, and rather a ha-
“ zardous descent, forcing our way through
“ the trees, and across two or three head-
“ long little streams, we arrived at a rocky
“ bank, a few feet above the river, com-
“ manding a fine view of the junction of
“ the Rhydol and Monach, which seem to
“ vie with each other in the turbulence of
“ their waters, and the frequency of their
“ cascades : immediately above the union
“ of

“ of the two torrents, rises a perpendicular
 “ rock, on the crags of which we saw
 “ several kites perched; the summit of
 “ the rock is crowned with wood, equal
 “ in luxuriance to that which clothes the
 “ lofty fides of the glen.”

CHAP. XXIII.

FROM MACHYNLLETH, BY LLANYDLOES, TO
 NEWTOWN.—PLYNLIMMON—GLÂS LLYN—
 FRWD Y PENNANT—LLYN YR AVANGE—BEA-
 VERS—LLANYDLOES—SEVERN—ROMAN FORT—
 NEWTOWN—WATERFALL—CASTELL DOLFOR-
 WYN—STORY OF SABRINA.

FROM Machynlleth towards Llanydloes,
 the road winds for several miles over
 dreary and barren moors. I had scarcely a
 single tree the whole way; and the only
 enlivening objects for the greatest part of
 the journey, were a few patches of corn,
 sparingly

sparingly scattered in the adjacent bottoms. About five miles from Machynlleth, I came to a long and lofty hill, which continues on an ascent for near three miles, from whose top I had an ample view of the country around me; but its beauties were very few, it seemed nothing more than one dismal waste of hill and vale. From hence I went over the turfy mountains, without a village, and almost without a cottage to be seen the whole way.

Soon after I had mounted the height, Plynllynn became visible at the distance of four or five miles on the right. Its name Plynllynn seems to have been derived from Pen llynn, *the summit of the beacon*, from its being so much higher than all the hills around it; and probably, on that account, it may have been of use to the neighbouring peasantry as a known mark by which they could (even in snow) steer their course over this uncouth country.

country. From the different accounts I had received of this mountain, I did not think my trouble in ascending it was likely to be repaid by any thing I should meet with in the journey ; I therefore kept along the road, and only passed it at a distance. The mountains around being all low, make it appear much higher than it really is, and from it's being the place from whence the three noted rivers, Severn, Wye, and Rhydol, all rise, may have been the cause of it's being so much known. In perpendicular height, it is far exceeded both by Snowdon and Cader Idris. In the flat country, betwixt Plynlimmon and the road, I observed a small unadorned pool, called Glâs Llyn, *the blue lake*.

When I had got about half way to Llanydloes, I turned on the right, and went about a mile and a half from the road to see a noted cataract, called Frwd y Pennant, *the torrent at the head of the*

vale. The rock was almost perpendicular, and the water, then in plenty, from the late rains, roared down with a thundering noise. The few shrubs hanging from the rocks about it, added to it's beauty. In height this is exceeded by few cataracts in North Wales, except Pistyll Rhaiadr.

About four miles from Llanydloes, the appearance of the country began to change, and the woody vales in the front, with the little Llyn yr Avange, *beaver's pool*, at a distance amongst them, formed upon the whole, a pleasing scene. In different parts of Wales there are several pools, called Beaver's pools; and we are assured by Giraldus Cambrensis, and other writers,* that formerly the beaver was an animal found in many different places. Giraldus, after giving a short description

* Itin. Camb. Syl. Gir. Camb. Wynne's History of Wales.

of them, says, that in his time, (about the year 1188) they were found, and not uncommonly, about the river Teivi, in Cardiganshire. They were called by the Welsh, with great propriety, *Lloft-Lydan*, or *the broad-tailed animal*. Their skin was of such esteem, as to be valued by the laws of Howel Dda, at a hundred and twenty pence; whilst that of the martin was only worth twenty-four; and those of an ermine, otter, wolf, or fox, only twelve pence. They seem to have constituted the chief finery and luxury of those days.*

The entrance into Llanydloes, *the church of St. Idlos*, which is over a long wooden bridge across the Severn, did not prepossess me much in its favor, and I found myself not deceived in my judgment of it. The streets are wide, but the houses are most of

* *Leges Wallicæ*, p. 260, 261. quoted in Pen-
nant's Tour, II. 143.

them built with laths and mud, filling up the intermediate spaces of a timber frame.

These are in general very irregular, and I found as great a scarcity of good houses in this place as in any I ever was in, of it's size and consequence. The town-house is constructed in a manner something similar to the others, and is, upon the whole, a most ill-looking building.

The width of the streets in this place, singular to say) is a great defect, for the inhabitants throughout the town, taking the advantage of it, throw all their dirt and manure in great heaps before their doors; and these are in general so large, that in a hot day the exhalation of noxious vapours from them, must be a great nuisance to any person accustomed to cleanliness.

The town is built in the form of a cross, having the market house nearly in the centre. Here is carried on a considerable trade.

trade for yarn, which being manufactured into flannels, is sent to Welsh Pool for sale. Within the church are six arches, whose columns are surrounded with round pillars, ending in capitals of palm leaves. These, as the inhabitants assert, were brought from Cwm Hir abbey, in Radnorshire. A date on the roof intimates that it was erected in the year 1542.

The country all the way from Llanydloes to Newtown, seemed plainly to indicate an approach towards England, the road winding along a vale much flatter and more highly cultivated than any in the interior of Wales. Here were several fields, both of wheat and rye, two species of corn seldom grown in very mountainous countries, for the winds and storms are there so powerful as to shake the corn out of the ears sometime before it can ripen. I now wandered

On the gentle Severn's sedgy bank.

It was here but a few yards across, and it glided smoothly and silently along, reflecting brightly the green impending foliage of its banks.

I crossed the river before I came to the village of Pen-y-strywad, and went up to Caer-fws,* now a small hamlet, but formerly a Roman station of considerable note, situated on the bank of the Severn. The site of the encampment is yet discernible, being a quadrangular rampart, about a hundred and fifty yards square. On the north-west side are hollows, which were probably part of the fosses of the old precincts. In the south-west angle of it were dug up, about twenty years ago, some Roman bricks, which were used in building

* The name Caer-fws is supposed by some, to be derived from Hefus, a Roman lieu tenant, which was pronounced by the Britons, Caer-hefoos, and by contraction, Caer-fws. See Camb. Reg. II. 379.
the

the chimney of a public house not far distant. There are remains of four encampments in its vicinity, Rhos-ddiarbed, Gwynfynydd y gaer-fechan, and Cefyn-carnedd. From this station the Romans had a road, called Sarn-fws, or Sarn Swfan; which, from its direction, though it cannot now be traced the whole way, is supposed to have led to Chelster.

In Newtown, or as it is called by the Welsh, *Tre-newydd*, I met with nothing remarkable. It is a clean place, and the country around it is fertile and pleasant.

A glen about a mile from hence, on the right of the road to Builth, was pointed out to me, as containing a small waterfall, and some beautiful scenery; but when I got to it, I was disappointed in finding them by much the most despicable of any I had yet seen. The face of the rock had much the appearance of an old shattered wall, thrown assant, one end sinking into

the ground. The water scarcely trickled down it, and from the muddy hole at the bottom into which it ran, seemed feldom to come in any quantity.

Returning to Newtown, I crossed the river, and walked along its banks about three miles and a half to Castell Dolforwyn, *the castle of the virgin's meadow*. This stands on a lofty hill, on the north-west bank of the Severn, and commands the whole of the surrounding country. From it I had a most lovely and extensive prospect of the vale of Severn, through which the river was seen to glide in elegant curves, blackened by its high and shady banks. The landscape was enlivened with all the luxuriance of woods and meadow; whilst the towns and villages around lent their aid to decorate the scene.

The castle has been a four-sided building, of no great strength, about fifty yards long and twenty-five wide, and the exterior

exterior walls appear to have been about four feet in thickness. A small part of the north wall, with some trifling remains of the interior, are yet left. The south and east walls are entirely demolished, and the other parts that are yet standing, are in so shattered a condition, that it seemed as if a strong wind might almost level the whole with the ground. I was informed that some persons in digging amongst the ruins a little time before I was here, had met with a few reddish earthen vessels and some coins, but what these were I could not learn.

It is not known, with any degree of certainty, to whom the foundation of Castell Dolforwyn ought to be attributed; Dugdale* has given it to David ap Llewelyn, a prince, who reigned in North Wales from 1240 to 1246; Stow† to Llewelyn

* *Monasticon Anglicanum*, II. 223.

† *Stow's Annals*, p. 200.

himself;

himself; and Mr. Evans, from the authority of John David Rhys, * to Bleddyn ap Cynvyn, sometime betwixt the years 1066 and 1073. The latter now is generally supposed to have been in the right.

Edward I. in the sixth year of his reign, made Bogo do Knovill governor, † and the next year granted it to Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, to hold to himself and his heirs, the service of a knight's fee. ‡ The

* *Johannis Davidis Rhefi Linguae Cymraecae institutiones accuratas*, quoted in *Evan's Dissertation de Bardis*, p. 92.

† Dugdale's *Baronage*, II. 5.

‡ Ibid. I. 142. Stow's *Annals*, p. 200. A *knight's fee* has been defined to be so much inheritance, as is sufficient yearly to maintain a knight with convenient retinue; which, in the time of Henry III. was accounted at £15. It was made £20. by the Statute i. Edw. II. c. 1. But Sir Thomas Smith, in his *Repub. Angl. lib. I. c. 18.* rates it at £40. And Sir Edward Coke, 2. *Inst. fol. 596.* says, a *knight's fee* contained *twelve plow-lands*, or six hundred and eighty acres.

fon

son of this Earl was attainted of high treason, but afterwards upon the reversal of the attainder, it was restored to the family, in the person of his grandson Roger, who died possessed of it.* By the marriage of Anne, sister to the last Earl of March, with Richard Plantagenet, Earl of Cambridge, this castle, along with those of Denbigh and Montgomery, became the property of the House of York.

In the year 1401 Sir Hugh Burrel was made governor. †

Leland, ‡ speaking of it, says, "Dolveron
" Castle ruin is in the Lordshipe of Kid-
" owen, upon an half mile or more from
" Severne, a III miles up Severne from
" Montgomery, § and was the very chief
" place of all the lordshipe of Kidowen."

* Dugdale's Baronage, I. 148. † Ibid. II. 62.

‡ Leland's Itin. VII. 16.

§ Leland has mistaken this distance, for by the nearest road possible it is above *five* miles.

How

How this place took the name of Dolforwyn, or *the meadow of the virgin*, cannot with certainty be known; circumstances however would lead one to suspect, that it had some allusion to the story of Habren or Abren, the daughter of Locrinus, son of Brutus, the first king of Britain, by Effyllt, a daughter of the king of Germany, whom he had taken captive in his wars against Humyr, the king of the Huns. Previous to his taking this female he had espoused himself to Guendolena, a daughter of Corineus, a hero who had entered the Island, at the first settling, with Brutus; and the chieftain, fearing this might put off the marriage, threatened to come against him with a powerful army, and force him to keep his former promise. Locrinus was therefore compelled to conceal Effyllt in a cavern, declaring that he had sent her out of the kingdom, and to marry Guendolena. Upon the death of Corineus, which appears
to

to have happened but a short time afterwards, he immediately divorced Guendolena, and acknowledged Effyllt for his queen. When he died, Guendolena assumed the government, and with unrelenting cruelty, caused Effyllt and a daughter, called Alaen, which she had borne to Locrinus, to be thrown into the river and drowned: from this circumstance it is supposed to have assumed the name of Abrien, which afterwards, with a slight alteration, became Sabrina, and then Severn.*

Of this story, Milton,† who has made Abren or Sabrina, the goddess of chastity,

* This event is said to have taken place above 1000 years before the birth of Christ. See Geoffry ap Arthur, or Jeffry of Monmouth's History of Britain, in the Cambrian Register, II. p. 26, 29. And after him Matt. Westm. p. 20. Speed's Maps, c. X. fol. 115. And Whitelock's Memorials from Brutus, p. 2

† In his Masque of Comus.

has given us so elegant and poetical a description, that I cannot resist the temptation of following Mr. Pennant's excellent example in transcribing it here.

Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure,
Whilome she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
The guiltless damsel flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame, Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That stay'd her flight with his cross flowing course.
The water nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to embathe
In nectar'd lavers, strow'd with asphodel;
And through the porch and inlet of each sense,
Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd;
And underwent a quick immortal change—
Made goddess of the river: she still retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping

Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elfe delights to make,
Which she with precious viol'd liquors heals;
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lay,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy dafodils.
And as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invok'd in warbled song;
For maiden-hood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard besetting need.

CHAP. XXIV.

FROM NEWTOWN TO MONTGOMERY.—SEVERN
—MONTGOMERY—CHURCH—CHARACTER OF
LORD HERBERT—CASTLE—RUSTIC VIEW—BRITISH
POST—SINGULAR CUSTOM.

I LEFT Newtown, and went over a
fine, cultivated country to Montgomery.
The infant Severn accompanied me near
half

half the way, sometimes approaching close to the road, and at others, hidden by intervening trees and hedges. Just before I entered the town, I was surprized by the road leading me along a hill, which was elevated so much above it, as to give me a complete bird's-eye-view into almost every street.

Montgomery appeared, from it's neat houses, to be inhabited chiefly by persons of small fortune, who had come here to lead a life of retirement; and it is well calculated for this purpose. It is clean, and well built; and seems capable of affording all the comforts and conveniencies of life, without any of the bustle and noise of a large town. The adjacent country is decorated with lively and luxuriant scenery, which indicates population and fertility. Lord Lyttleton has remarked, that when he travelled through Wales, in the year

1756,

1756,* this place was little better than a village: if this was the case, there must have been since that time a very considerable addition made to it, for it is now a most respectable market town: and these late alterations may have been the cause of it's present neat appearance.

The church is a handsome cruciform structure, dedicated to St. Nicholas, and has within it an antient monument, to the memory of Richard Herbert, Esquire, the father of the famous Lord Herbert of Cherbury, of whom Mr. Granger† has given us this singular character: " Lord Herbert stands in the first rank of the public ministers, historians, and philosophers of his age. It is hard to say, whether his person, his understanding, or his courage, was the most extraordinary; as the fair,

* See his Letters, printed at the end of the present work.

† Granger's Biographical History.

the learned, and the brave, held him in equal admiration. But the same man was wise and capricious; redressed wrongs and quarrelled for punctilios; hated bigotry in religion, and was himself a bigot in philosophy. He exposed himself to such dangers as other men of courage would have carefully declined: and called in question the fundamentals of a religion, which none had the hardiness to dispute besides himself." The figures on this monument of Richard Herbert and his Lady, are recumbent, and under what has once been a magnificent and much ornamented canopy. In a corner close by it, was a large collection of legs, arms, heads, and trunks of other monumental figures, but all so broken and demolished, that I could make nothing out of them. In the church-yard I observed more epitaphs upon the grave-stones than I ever saw together before, and
of

of course amongst so many, some truly ridiculous.

Adjoining upon the church-yard is a piece of ground unconsecrated, which some gentlemen of Montgomery have made into a court, where they play at the game of fives against the church.

The town owes it's name of Montgomery and Mons Gomerici to Roger de Montgomery, Earl of Shrewsbury, who in 1092 entered Powisland, and took this place, then called Ire-faldwyn, or Baldwin's Town, from it's having been built and fortified with a castle by Baldwin, lieutenant of the marches to William the Conqueror. The Earl fortified the place afresh, and called it, after his own name, Montgomery.*

The

* Powel's History of Wales, p. 152. Camb. Brit. III. 531. Mat. Westm. p. III. says, "that when Henry III. erected here a new castle in 1221, it

The castle is situated on an eminence, nearly north of the town, and has from every appearance been a grand and august building. It is now so much demolished, and even the foundations at present are so very imperfect, that it is impossible to ascertain, with any degree of accuracy, what has been its extent. It stood on a rock quite precipitous on one side, and of so great an height as to have the command of all the places around it. The remains are a small part of a tower at the south-west corner, and a few low and broken walls. In this tower are several small holes, similar to those I had before seen in the Roman fort at Segontium, near Caernarvon; and these served still more to convince me that they were all originally formed for no other purpose than to rest in, was then called, from its situation, Mons Gomericus; but I am at a loss to know the meaning of the word *Gomericus*."

them

them poles, for the support of the scaffolds used in building. Some of these are near six feet in depth. This fortress seems to have been divided by four fosses, cut in the rock, each of which most probably had formerly it's drawbridge.

The first authentic accounts we have of the Castle of Montgomery are, that in 1094, William Rufus having been engaged in an unsuccessful expedition against the Welsh (who in the preceding year had risen in arms and ransacked this castle*) and having lost a great number of men and horses, was obliged to return into England to reinforce his army, after having had just time to repair it.† On his retreat, the Welsh again laid siege to it, being then

* Leland's Collectanea, II. 314.

† Powel, p. 153. Matt. Paris, p. 15. Matt. Westm. p. 17. Holinshed's Chronicle, II. 20. 23. Carte's History of England, I. 466.

reputed the strongest and best fortified castle in Wales : the Normans gallantly defended it for many days, but the Welsh having found means to undermine the walls, took it by storm, and having put the garrison to the sword, levelled the fortress to the ground. After many struggles, ineffectual on the part of the English, it was not till near four years after this event, that the king was able to obtain a victory at all decisive. Upon again taking this place, the castle was immediately rebuilt by the Earl of Shrewsbury ; but was after that again destroyed, though at what period is not known. It appears that in 1221, Henry III. in order, as the historians say, to restrain the predatory excursions of the Welsh, marched against them, and erected a castle here, which he granted to his justiciary, Hubert de Burgh, with two hundred marks annually, and a greater salary

salary in case of war.* About seven years after this, as some of the soldiers of the garrison were attempting, with the assistance of the country people, to open a road through an adjoining forest, a deep and extensive cover, of many miles, which had long afforded the Welsh a secure retreat; from whence issuing, they frequently murdered and plundered travellers through the country; they were on a sudden attacked by a body of the natives, who with great slaughter obliged them to seek refuge in the castle. The party then invested, and laid regular siege to it, upon which Herbert de Burgh, alarmed at his situation, sent to Henry for succour, who immediately in person, brought an army to his aid, and the

* Matt. Paris, p. 263. Matt. Westm. p. III. Holinshed's Chronicle, II. 203. Carte's History, I. 466.

Welsh upon his arrival raised the siege and fled.*

In 1231 a party of Welshmen, having made an excursion into the lands adjoining the castle, was intercepted by the English, and many of them were brought prisoners into it, and beheaded. Llewelyn the great, in revenge for this injury, assembling a great force, laid waste all the English borders. During the general consternation, Hubert de Burgh evacuated the castle, and it was seized by the Welsh, who burned it to the ground, and shortly after attacked and destroyed some others in south Wales.†

In the year 1268, in a conference at this place, a peace was established betwixt Llewelyn ap Gryffydd and Henry III. who, upon that prince's paying him a fine of

* Powell, p. 284, 285. Matt. Paris, p. 295.
Carte's History of England, II. 357.

† Powel, p. 287. Matt. Paris, 311.

thirty-two thousand marks,* restored to him four cantreds, which in the wars he had been deprived of.†

On an inquisition taken on the reversal of the attainder of Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, in 1345, that Earl was found to have been possessed of this castle at the time of his death. It continued in the family till, along with those of Denbigh and Dolforwyn, it passed by marriage with Anne, the sister of the late Earl, into the house of York.‡

Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, in his life, written by himself, speaks of it as having been the habitation of his grand-father, and great grand-father, who held it for the crown, as stewards of the castle, and of

* “Triginta duo millia *librarum* sterlingorum Regi concessit.” Matt. Paris, p. 851.

† Matt. Paris, p. 857. Matt. Westm. p. 347.

‡ Dugdale's Baronage, I. 147, 148, 150.

the hundred of Cherbury,' in which it was reputed to lie.*

In the civil wars of the reign of Charles I. Lord Herbert was made governor, but he did not declare himself either for the King or the Parliament, till the arrival of their army, under the command of Sir Thomas Middleton, in 1644; he, however, then upon a treaty, permitted them to enter the castle. Soon after this transaction, Lord Byron advanced with the king's army, consisting of about four thousand men, which obliged Middleton to flee to Oswestry, leaving Lord Herbert and all his foot soldiers in the castle. The royal forces now laid siege to it; but Sir Thomas, having been joined by Sir John Meldrum, Sir William Brereton, and Sir William Fairfax, returned with about three

* Life of Lord Herbert, p. 5. quoted in Pennant's Tour, II. 371.

thousand

thousand men to the relief of the place. Lord Byron drew up his men to engage them, and after a most dreadful conflict, which lasted about eight hours, the Parliament's army obtained a complete victory. The routed troops fled towards Shrewsbury, and the pursuit was continued near twenty miles. In this battle betwixt three and four hundred men of the King's party were slain, and above a thousand taken prisoners. The loss on the side of the Parliament was, Sir William Fairfax, Major Fitz-simons, and about sixty men killed, besides a hundred who were much wounded.* The castle met with the fate of all others, being dismantled by order of the Commons.

It was on a fine serene morning in the beginning of September, when I was here,

* Rushworth's Historical Collections, vol. II. part 3. p. 746, 747. Whitelock's Memorials, p. 104.

and

and I was so much charmed with the extensive and varied prospect from the castle, that I rested under the cool shade of one of it's walls for near an hour, feasting my eyes with the delightful picture before me. The scene, which was calculated for almost Arcadian felicity, was enlivened by the busy work of harvest, and the merry carol of the reapers floated through the air in cheerful melody. The rustic swains and damsels were all assiduously employed in gathering the yellow riches of the summer. Some were cutting, others binding, and the gleaner, "with bended shoulders traversing the field," followed the loaded waggons, carefully laying up every ear that fell.—I love to contemplate these rustic sights.

Hail, therefore, patroness of health and ease,
And contemplation, heart-consoling joys,
And harmless pleasures in the throng'd
Abode of multitudes unknown! hail, rural life!

Address

Address himself who will to the pursuit
Of honours, or emoluments, or fame;
I shall not add myself to such a chase,
Thwart his attempts, or envy his success.

On a hill not far from the castle, is a stupendous British post. The approach guarded by four ditches, with two or three entrances towards the main work, where some fosses run across the hill; the end of which is sufficiently guarded by the steepness.*

The town was formerly defended all round by walls strengthened with towers. Leland † thus describes it in his time:
“ It standithe a mile from Severne banke,
“ and is served with small rills coming
“ from the hills hard by. The soyle of
“ the ground of the towne is on mayne
“ flaty roke, and especially the parte of
“ the towne hillinge toward the castell,

* Pennant's Tour, II. 372. † Itin. VII. 16.

“ now

“ now a late reedified, whereby hathe
“ been a parke. Great ruines of the
“ waulle yet apere, *ad vestigia* of iiii gates,
“ thus called, Kedewen gate, Cherbury
“ gate, Arthur’s gate, and Kerry gate.
“ In the waulle yet remayne broken tour-
“ ets, of the which the white tower is
“ the most notable.”

Henry III. granted by charter, that the borough of Montgomery should have, amongst others, the privileges of a free borough. The town is governed by two bailiffs, and twelve burgeses, or common-council men. It sends one member to Parliament, who is elected by the burgeses, and returned by the bailiffs; Llanydloes, Welsh pool, and Llanfyllin, were formerly contributory, but they are now excluded from any share in the election.*

* Camden’s Britannia, II. 780. and Willis’s Notitia Parl. III. 78. and part II. 9. quoted Pennant’s Tour, II. 373.

In Blount's Tenures* I find a very curious custom, which once prevailed at this place. When any woman was found guilty, by the free burgessees of the town, of causing any strifes, fightings, defamations, or other disturbances of the public peace, she was adjudged to the goging-stool, or cucking-stool, there to stand with her feet naked, and her hair dishevelled for such a length of time as the burgessees should think proper, as a public example, and warning to all who beheld her. This cucking-stool is what the Saxons called scealfing or scolding stool, that is, a chair in which they placed scolding women as public examples, and in which, besides this, if the enormity of the case required it, they used to plunge them over head in water. This engine in general consisted of a long beam or rafter moving on a fulcrum,

* Edited by Beckwith, p. 282.

and extending to the centre of a pond, on which end the stool or seat used to be placed.*

* The cucking-stool is thus described by Jacob.
 “ Cucking-stool (*tumbrellum*) is an engine invented
 “ for the punishment of scolds and unquiet women,
 “ by ducking them in water, called, in antient
 “ time, a tumbrel, and sometimes a trebucket.
 “ In Domesday it is called *cathedra stercoris*; and
 “ the Saxons described it to be *cathedra in qua rix-*
 “ *osæ mulieres sedentes, aquis demergebantur*. It was
 “ antiently a punishment inflicted upon brewers
 “ and bakers, transgressing the laws, who were
 “ thereupon, in such a stool, immersed over head
 “ and ears in *stercore*, stinking water. Some think
 “ it a corruption from ducking-stool, and others
 “ from choaking-stool, *quia hoc modo demersæ aquis*
 “ *ferè suffocantur*.” See Jacob’s Law Dictionary.



END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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ERRATA TO VOL. I.

** The Reader's indulgence is requested for the following Errata, and some others of less consequence that have not been noticed, occasioned by the author's absence from London.

A few that are very material are printed in capitals.

Page. Line.

13. 7. for *side* read *sife*.
 16. 16. after *town* insert *and*.
 67. 9. dele *and Fosi*.
 100. 9. for *Beronica* read *Veronica*.
 143. 15. for OPENED read ENTERED.
 148. 11. for *Glydes* read *Glyder*.
 150. 2. for *this* read *some similar*.
 155. 8. for ALSO read ONLY.
 165. 12. for *elegancy* read *elegance*.
 191. 4. leave out the word TWO.
 195. 16. for *have stones* read *grave stones*.
 209. 18. for *sheet* read *sheeted*.
 212. 7. for *thence* read *from thence*.
 221. 15. for *send* read *tend*.
 223. 20. for *Piftyll* read *Disfyll*.
 231. 11. for *are* read *is*.
 237. 12. for *this present* read *the present*.
 242. 4. for *any place* read *any other place*.
 245. 18. for *rock* read *rocks*.
 257. 10. for *hugies* read *hujus*.
 265. 9. for *they* read *the founders*.
 266. 17. for *stunchenge, rolbrick* read *Stonehenge, Rollrick*.
 — 19. for *stones* read *stone*.
 287. 21. for *was* read *were*.
 296. 13. for *Ballcuin* read *Ballium*.
 310. 6. leave out *when*.
 334. 5. for *tolerable* read *tolerably*.
 363. 12. for AND THAT IS read THAT IS NOT.
 430. 16. for DEFILED read DEIFIED.
 477. 2. for *and* read *an*.
 490. 11. after *heirs* insert *on*.
 493. 8. and 11. for *Alaen* and *Abrien* read *Abren*.

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